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The glories of the Catholic Church

Richard Challoner, Henry Athanasius Brann (D.D.), John Gilmary Shea, John Ireland (abp. of St. Paul.), Pope Leo XIII

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HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII.

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THE GLORIES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTED IN DEFENCE OF HIS FAITH

*A COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, TOGETHER WITH A FULL
EXPLANATION OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS*

INCLUDING

THE TRIUMPHS OF THE CHURCH IN EVERY AGE

BY

THE REV. HENRY A. BRANN, D. D.

THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

BY

JOHN ^{Damon}GILMARTY SHEA, L. L. D.

THE DUTY AND VALUE OF PATRIOTISM

BY

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND

THE ENCYCLICAL LETTERS ON THE STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO

THE DEFENDERS OF OUR FAITH

AND THE RULERS OF THE WORLD

BY

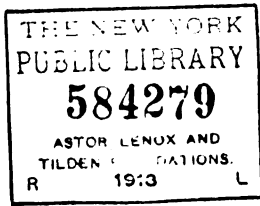
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VOLUME THREE

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VOL. III.

PATRIOTISM: ITS DUTY AND VALUE.
POPE LEO XIII. TO THE RULERS OF THE WORLD.
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THE GLORIES OF MARY.
THE GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH.
THE GLORIES OF THE ANGELS.

PATRIOTISM:
ITS DUTY AND VALUE.

BY

MOST REV. JOHN IRELAND, D. D.

ARCHBISHOP OF ST. PAUL, MINN.

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND
ON THE
DUTY AND VALUE OF PATRIOTISM,
AND THE
MODERN ANTI-CATHOLIC MOVEMENT.

COMMANDER, COMPANIONS: To speak of patriotism is my evening's task. An easy and gracious one it ought to be. Patriotism is personified in my audience. The honor is mine to address the country's heroes, the country's martyrs. At country's call you quickly buckled your armor on, and rushing where battle raged, you offered for your country's life the life-blood of your hearts. Many of you bear upon limb and face the sacred stigmata of patriotism. Your tried hands are doubly pledged in purest unselfishness and bravest resolve to uphold in the reign of peace the loved flag which in days of war they carried over gory fields above stain or reproach. I could not, if I would, close the portals of my soul to the rich and sweet inspirations which come to me from your souls.

I shall define patriotism as you understand and feel it. Patriotism is love of country, and loyalty to its life and weal—love tender and strong: tender as the love of son for mother, strong as the pillars of death; loyalty generous and disinterested, shrinking from no sacrifice, seeking no reward save country's honor and country's triumph.

BEAUTY AND VALUE OF PATRIOTISM.

Patriotism! There is magic in the word. It is bliss to repeat it. Through ages the human race burnt the incense of admiration and reverence at the shrines of patriotism. The most beautiful pages of history are those which count its deeds. Fireside tales, the outpourings of the

memories of peoples, borrow from it their warmest glow. Poets are sweetest when they re-echo its whisperings ; orators are most potent when they thrill its chords to music.

Pagan nations were wrong when they made gods of their noblest patriots. But the error was the excess of a great truth: that heaven unites with earth in approving and blessing patriotism, that patriotism is one of earth's highest virtues, worthy to have come down from the atmosphere of the skies.

The exalted patriotism of the exiled Hebrew exhaled itself in a canticle of religion which Jehovah inspired, and which has been transmitted, as the inheritance of God's people, to the Christian Church: "Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept, when we remembered Sion. . . If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand be forgotten. Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I do not remember thee, if I do not make Jerusalem the beginning of my joy."

The human race pays homage to patriotism, because of its supreme value. The value of patriotism to a people is above gold and precious stones, above commerce and industry, above citadels and warships. Patriotism is the vital spark of national honor ; it is the fount of the nation's prosperity, the shield of the nation's safety. Take patriotism away : the nation's soul has fled, bloom and beauty have vanished from the nation's countenance.

The human race pays homage to patriotism because of its supreme loveliness. Patriotism goes out to what is among the earth's possessions the most precious, the first and best and dearest—country ; and its effusion is the fragrant flowering of the purest and noblest sentiments of the heart.

Patriotism is innate in all men ; the absence of it betokens a perversion of human nature ; but it grows its full growth only where thoughts are elevated and heart-beatings are generous.

Next to God is country, and next to religion is patriotism. No praise goes beyond its deserts. It is sublime in its heroic oblation upon the field of battle. "O glorious is he," exclaims in Homer the Trojan warrior, "who for his country falls!" It is sublime in the oft-repeated toil of dutiful citizenship. "Of all human doings," writes Cicero, "none is more honorable and more estimable than to merit well of the commonwealth."

COUNTRIES ARE OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT.

Countries are of divine appointment. The Most High "divided the nations, separated the sons of Adam, and appointed the bounds of peoples." The physical and moral necessities of God's creatures are revela-

tions of His will and laws. ~~Man is born a social being.~~ A condition of his existence and of his growth to mature age is the family. Nor does the family suffice to itself. A larger social organism is needed, into which families gather, so as to obtain from one another security to life and property, and aid in the development of the faculties and powers with which nature has endowed the children of men. The whole human race is too extensive and too diversified in interests to serve those ends : hence its sub-divisions into countries or peoples. Countries have their providential limits—the waters of a sea, a mountain range, the lines of similarity of requirements, or of methods of living. The limits widen in space according to the measure of the destinies which the great Ruler allots to peoples, and the importance of their parts in the mighty work of the cycles of years, the ever advancing tide of humanity's evolution. The Lord is the God of nations, because he is the God of men. No nation is born into life, or vanishes back into nothingness, without His bidding. I believe in the providence of God over countries as I believe in His wisdom and His love, and my patriotism to my country rises within my soul invested with the halo of my religion to my God.

OUR OWN COUNTRY.

More than a century ago a trans-Atlantic poet and philosopher, reading well the signs, wrote:

“ Westward the star of empire takes its way,
The first four acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day :
Time's noblest offspring is the last.”

Berkeley's prophetic eye had descried America. What shall I say in a brief discourse of my country's value and beauty, of her claims to my love and loyalty ! I will pass by in silence her fields and forests, her rivers and seas, the boundless riches hidden beneath her soil and amid the rocks of her mountains, her pure and health-giving air, her transcendent wealth of nature's fairest and most precious gifts. I will not speak of the noble qualities and robust deeds of her sons, skilled in commerce and industry, valorous in war, prosperous in peace. In all these things America is opulent and great ; but beyond them and above them is her singular grandeur, to which her material splendor is only the fitting circumstance.

America, born into the family of nations in these latter times, is the highest billow in humanity's evolution, the crowning effort of ages in the aggrandizement of man. Unless we take her in this altitude we do not comprehend her ; we belittle her towering stature, and conceal the singular design of Providence in her creation.

THE COUNTRY OF HUMAN DIGNITY.

America is the country of human dignity and human liberty.

When the fathers of the Republic declared: "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," a cardinal principle was enunciated, which in its truth was as old as the race, but in practical realization almost unknown.

Slowly, amid sufferings and revolutions, humanity had been reaching out toward a reign of the rights of man. Ante-Christian paganism had utterly denied such rights. It allowed nothing to man as man; he was what wealth, place or power made him. Even the wise Aristotle taught that some men were intended by nature to be slaves and chattels. The sweet religion of Christ proclaimed aloud the doctrine of the common fatherhood of God, and the universal brotherhood of men. Eighteen hundred years, however, went by, and the civilized world had not yet put its civil and political institutions in accord with its spiritual faith. The Christian Church was all this time leavening human society, and patiently awaiting the promised fermentation. This came at last, and it came in America. It came in a first manifestation through the Declaration of Independence; it came in a second and final manifestation through President Lincoln's proclamation of emancipation.

In America all men are civilly and politically equal; all have the same rights; all wield the same arm of defence and of conquest, the suffrage; and the sole condition of rights and of power is simple manhood.

THE COUNTRY OF LIBERTY.

Liberty is the exemption from all restraint save that of the laws of justice and order; the exemption from submission to other men, except as they represent and enforce those laws. The divine gift of liberty to man is God's recognition of his greatness and his dignity. The sweetness of life and the power of growth lie in liberty. The loss of liberty is the loss of light and sunshine, the loss of life's best portion. Humanity, under the spell of heavenly memories, never ceased to dream of liberty, and to aspire to its possession. Now and then, here and there, its refreshing breezes caressed humanity's brow. But not until the Republic of the West was born, not until the star-spangled banner rose toward the skies, was liberty caught up in humanity's embrace, and embodied in a great and abiding nation.

In America the government takes from the liberty of the citizen only so much as is necessary for the weal of the nation, which the citizen by

his own act freely concedes. In America there are no masters who govern in their own right, for their own interest, or at their own will. We have over us no Louis XIV. saying : “ *L'état c'est moi* ” ; no Hohenzollern, announcing that in his acts as sovereign he is responsible only to his conscience and to God. Ours is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. The government is our own organized will.

THERE IS NO STATE ABOVE OR APART FROM THE PEOPLE.

Rights begin with and go upward from the people. In other countries, even those apparently the most free, rights begin with and come downward from the state. The rights of citizens, the rights of the people, are concessions which have been painfully wrenched from the governing powers. With Americans, whenever the organized government does not prove its grant, the liberty of the individual citizen is sacred and inviolable. Elsewhere there are governments called republics : universal suffrage constitutes the state ; but once constituted, the state is tyrannous and arbitrary, and invades at will private rights, and curtails at will individual liberty. One Republic is liberty's native home—America.

The God-given mission of the Republic of America is not only to its own people : it is to all the peoples of the earth, before whose eyes it is the symbol of human rights and human liberty, toward whom its flag flutters hopes of human happiness for themselves.

Is there not for Americans a meaning to the word, Country ? Is there not for Americans reason to live for country, and, if need there be, to die for country ? Is there not joy in the recollection that you have been her saviours, and glory in the name of America's “ Loyal Legion ? ” Whatever the country, patriotism is a duty : in America the duty is thrice sacred.

A DUTY OF JUSTICE AND OF GRATITUDE.

The duty of patriotism is the duty of justice and of gratitude. The country fosters and protects our dearest interests—our altars and hearthstones—*pro aris et focis*. Without it there is no safety for life or property, no opportunities of development and progress. All that the country is she makes ours. We are wise of her wisdom, rich of her opulence, resplendent of her glory, strong of her fortitude. At once the prisoner Paul rose to eminence, and obtained respect from Palestinian Jews and Roman soldiers, when he proudly announced that he was a citizen of Rome—*Civis Romanus*. And to-day how significant the world over are the words : I am a citizen of America—*Civis Americanus!*

Duty to country is a duty of conscience, a duty to God. For country exists by natural divine right. It receives from God the authority needful for its life and work : its authority to command is divine. The apostle of Christ to the gentiles writes : " There is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." The religion of patriotism is not sufficiently considered : and yet, it is this religion which gives to country its majesty, and to patriotism its sacredness and force.

NEXT TO GOD IS COUNTRY.

As the part to the whole, so is the citizen to the country ; and this relation is the due measure of patriotism. The country and its interests are paramount to the citizen and his interests. A king of France, St. Louis, set to his device this motto : "*Dieu la France et Marguerite.*" It told the order of allegiances : God first, next to God country, next to country family, one's self the last—the willing and generous chevalier, even unto death, of family, country, and God.

Alliance to country is limited only by allegiance to God. God and His eternal laws of justice and righteousness are supreme, and hold first claims upon the conscience. A country which exacts the violation of those laws, annuls its own moral authority and becomes an aggregation of human wills, which physical force alone sustains. " To God, that which is God's ; to Cæsar, that which is Cæsar's." In olden paganism the state arrogated to itself supremacy in ethics as in temporals, and ruled consciences. Under this tyranny of the soul freedom's last ray vanished ; the last vestige of human dignity was effaced. Christ made men free ; He brought back the state to its proper orbit ; and, restoring truth upon earth, He restored manhood to man, and to country the effulgence of the skies.

THE SUPREME TEST OF PATRIOTISM.

It is fortunate for a people that from time to time supreme emergencies arise testing its patriotism to the highest pitch. If patriotism remains dormant for a long period it may lessen in strength, while the reflection and self-consciousness which resolute action awakens result in a fuller estimate of the value of the country and institutions which it is the duty of patriotism to defend.

A supreme emergency did arise for the people of America.

There had been, indeed, patriotism intense and sublime in the Revolutionary war, when

" In their ragged regimentals
Stood the old Continentals,
Yielding not."



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But had this patriotism survived? Notable changes had come over the country. The population had been made much more eclectic; commerce and industry, usually unpropitious to sentiment and exaltation of soul, had engrossed the public mind; the spirit of democracy, in its workings toward individualism of character, might have unfitted the citizen for sacrifice in behalf of the general weal. I was in Europe when the civil war broke out, and I well remember the tone of the public press regarding the American situation. It was asserted that patriotism was unknown to Americans, and that a free government like ours, compelled to rely upon volunteer service, could not muster a large army of defenders. The proclamation of President Lincoln calling for 75,000 soldiers was received as the venturesome act of despair, and a quick dissolution of the Union was prophesied. At home there were not a few whose thoughts were those of the unfriendly Europeans.

On the morning of the twelfth day of April, in the memorable year of 1861, a cannon-ball swept over the waters of Charleston harbor, aimed with deadly intent at the star-spangled banner, floating above the walls of Sumter. War was declared against the country.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR.

How much there was at stake! Scarcely can we at this moment recall without trepidation the awful significance of the contest.

At stake was the union of the States, the strength and life of the country. What constitutes each State, from the Atlantic waters to those of the Pacific, strong, hopeful, palpitating with giant life and ready for giant progress? This only fact: that the States are one nation, and that, at home and abroad, one flag symbolizes them. A northern republic, a southern republic, a western republic—the nations would despise them. The Republic of the United States—the nations fear and honor it.

At stake was the plenary recognition of human rights in our own country. In contradiction to the Declaration of Independence, men were held as slaves—forsooth, because of color; in practice, America had failed as yet to be the ideal country of manhood and human dignity. Had rebellion triumphed, slavery would have been confirmed, and the Declaration of Independence formally and permanently belied.

At stake was liberty for the world, the stability of a government of the people, for the people and by the people. The Union disrupted, its shattered fragments prostrate over the land, as the broken and desolate columns of once famous temples in Grecian and Roman regions, Liberty, shrieking over the ruins, would have hastened back to caverns of gloom, her friends abandoning hope, her enemies rejoicing and confident. The death of the Union implied a century of retrogression for humanity.

Deep and soul-rending was the ceaseless anxiety of freedom's sons during the dreary years of America's civil war. At every rising of the morning sun the heavens were questioned :

“ O say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming ?

“ O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave ? ”

O God of nations ! we, this evening, thank thee : all was well : American patriotism was on guard : and the day came when, at Appomattox, one flag unfurled its beauteous folds over both contending armies ;

“ 'Tis the star-spangled banner : O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave ! ”

RESULTS OF THE WAR.

Two things in our civil war amazed the world—one, the number and courage of our volunteer soldiers ; the other, the ability of the commanders. In other countries large standing armies, years of careful training for men and officers, are the prerequisites of successful warfare. In America the chief executive of the Republic waves his wand, and armies spring up as if by incantation. One motive rules them, the saving of the country ; they are most daring in deed ; the leadership is most skilful. The records of their battles are studied in wonderment by famed warriors of Europe. Especially did the skilled leadership in our armies astonish Europeans. I met recently in Paris a well-known general of Russia ; he said : “ War is a science of high degree ; at the commencement of the contest the government of the United States had at its disposal only a handful of trained officers ; the war, moreover, was to offer in its varied operations unusual difficulties ; and yet the command throughout the vast army was admirable in skill of planning and execution.”

Great the sacrifices which the war in defence of the country demanded ! But great the results ! No one now doubts that America is patriotic, and that a free people may be relied upon to defend its country. The United States is respected by the nations of the world : they remember what it was capable of when divided ; they understand what it is capable of when united. The victory of the Union brought peace and prosperity to conquerors and to conquered : to-day the conquered rejoice no less than the conquerors that the old flag has not lost one star from its azure ground. The seal of finality has been set upon the Union, the God of battle ending disputes, and deciding that we are a nation one and indestructible. Slavery has been blotted out, and the escutcheon of free

America is cleansed of blemish. Liberty is without peril in her chosen home, and from America's shores she sends her fragrant breathings across seas and oceans. The quickened march of republicanism and democracy which the present times witness through the southern continent of America, and through Europe, goes out from the great heart of the triumphant Republic of the United States.

The sacrifices! Each one of you, companions, says in truth: "*Quorum pars magna fui.*" The results! They are yours, since the sacrifices were yours which purchased them. This great nation is your especial belonging: you saved it by the libation of your blood. By you the star-spangled banner was guarded, at the peril of your life, in its hour of trial; let others love it and seek its smiles: they cannot have for it your passion, and, were speech allowed it, accents of sweetness would flow out to you which others should not hear.

PATRIOTISM IN TIME OF PEACE.

The days of peace have come upon our fair land: the days when patriotism was a duty have not departed. What was saved by war must be preserved.

A government of the people, by the people, and for the people, as proposed by the founders of the Republic, was, in the light of the facts of history, a stupendous experiment. The experiment has so far succeeded. A French publicist, De Maistre, once dismissed with contempt the argument drawn from the United States in favor of free institutions in Europe, remarking: "The Republic of the United States is in its swathing-clothes; let it grow: wait a century, and you will see." The Republic has lived out a century, it has lived out a mighty civil war, with no diminution, assuredly, of vigor and promise. Can we say, however, that it is beyond all the stages of an experiment? The world at large is not willing to grant this conclusion: it tells us, even, that the Republic is but now entering upon its crucial crisis. New conditions, indeed, confront us: new perils menace us, in a population bordering on the hundredth million, and prepared quickly to leap beyond this figure, in plethoric and unwieldy urban conglomerations, in that unbridled luxury of living consequent on vast material prosperity, which in all times is a dreaded foe to liberty. It were reckless folly on our part to deny all force to the objections which are put to us.

Meanwhile, the destinies of numerous peoples are in the balance. They move toward liberty, as liberty is seen to reign undisturbed in America; they recede toward absolutism and hereditary *régimes*, as clouds are seen darkening our sky. Civil, political, social happenings of America are watched the world over with intense anxiety, because of

their supposed bearings upon the question of their practicability of popular government. A hundred times the thought pressed itself upon me, as I discussed in foreign countries the modern democracy, that, could Americans understand how much is made to depend upon the outcome of republican and democratic institutions in their country, a new fire of patriotism, a new zeal in the welfare of the Republic, would kindle within their hearts.

For my part, I have unwavering faith in the Republic of America. I have faith in the providence of God and the progress of humanity. I will not believe that liberty is not a permanent gift, and it were not if America fail. I have faith in the powerful and loyal national heart of America, which clings fast to liberty, and, sooner or later, rights wrongs and uproots evils. I have no fears. Clouds cross the heavens: soon a burst of sunlight dispels them. Different interests in society are out of joint with one another, and the social organism is feverish: it is simply the effort toward new adjustments; in a little while there will be order and peace. Threatening social and political evils are near, and are seemingly gaining ground: the American people are conservatively patient: but ere long the national heart is roused, and the evils, however formidable be their aspect, go down before the tread of an indignant people.

DANGERS TO A GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE.

The safety of the Republic lies in the vigilant and active patriotism of the American people.

There is a danger in the ignorance of voters. As a rule, the man who does not read and write intelligently, cannot vote intelligently. Americans understand the necessity of popular instruction, and spare no expense in spreading it. They cannot be too zealous in the matter. They need to have laws in every State which will punish, as guilty of crime against the country, the parent who neglects to send his children to school.

There is a danger—and a most serious one—in corrupt morals. A people without good morals is incapable of self-government. At the basis of the proper exercise of the suffrage lie unselfishness and the spirit of sacrifice. A corrupt man is selfish; an appeal to duty finds no response in his conscience; he is incapable of the high-mindedness and generous acts which are the elements of patriotism; he is ready to sell the country for pelf or pleasure. Patriotism takes alarm at the spread of intemperance, lasciviousness, dishonesty, perjury; for country's sake it should arm against those dire evils all the country's forces, its legislatures, its courts, and above all else, public opinion. Materialism and the denial of a living, supreme God, annihilate conscience, and break down

the barriers to sensuality; they sow broadcast the seeds of moral death: they are fatal to liberty and social order. A people without a belief in God and a future life of the soul will not remain a free people. The age of the democracy must, for its own protection, be an age of religion.

Empires and monarchies rely upon sword and cannon; republics upon the citizen's respect for law. Unless law be sacred a free government will not endure. Laws may be repealed through constitutional means, but while they are inscribed on the statute book they should be observed. The lowering of the dignity of law, by deed, teaching or connivance, is treason. Anarchical explosions, mob riots, or lynchings, shake the pillars of the commonwealth; other violations of law, the determined defiance of municipal and State authority by the liquor-traffic, the stealthy avoidance of payment of taxes and of custom duties, sear consciences, and beget a fatal habit of disobedience. A law-abiding people only is worthy of liberty and capable of guarding its treasures.

THE PURITY OF THE BALLOT.

What shall I say of the purity of the ballot, of the integrity of the public official? I touch upon the life-threads of the Republic, and words fail to express the solemnity of my thoughts. The poet Virgil places amid horrible torments in his hell the man "who sold his country for gold, and imposed upon it a master; who made and unmade laws for a price."

"Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem
Imposuit; fixit leges pretio, atque refixit."

The poet had a righteous sense of the enormity of the crime. The suffrage is the power of life or death over the state. The one licit motive in its use is the public weal, to which private and party interests should be always sacrificed. The voter making misuse of the trust deserves to be disfranchised; the man who compasses the misuse, who weaves schemes to defraud the popular will, deserves to be proscribed. The public official is appointed for the people's good, and is sworn to work for it; if he prostitutes his office, legislative or executive, to enrich himself or his friends, he has "sold his country for gold," and he is a traitor. The distribution of office, or of administrative power, must be based on fitness; the spoils system in politics inevitably leads to public corruption, treacherous and unsafe administration, and the ultimate foundering of the ship of state.

AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP—THE SOLE STANDARD.

Storms are passing over the land, arising from sectarian hatred, and nativist or foreign prejudices. These are scarcely to be heeded: they cannot last. Day by day the spirit of Americanism waxes strong; narrowness of thought and unreasoning strife cannot resist its influences.

This country is America: only they who are loyal to her can be allowed to live under her flag; and they who are loyal to her may enjoy all her liberties and rights. Freedom of religion is accorded by the Constitution: religion is put outside state action, and most wisely so; therefore, the religion of a citizen must not be considered by voter or executive officer. The oath of allegiance to the country makes the man a citizen: if that allegiance is not plenary and supreme, he is false to his profession; if it is, he is an American. Discriminations and segregations, in civil or political matters, on lines of religion, of birth-place, or of race, or of language—and, I add, or of color—is un-American, and wrong. Compel all to be Americans, in soul as well as in name; and then let the standard of their value be their American citizenship.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM IS NEEDED.

Who will say that there is no work for patriotism in days of peace? If it need not be so courageous as in war, it needs to be more watchful and enduring: for the evils against which it contends in peace are more persevering, more stealthy in the advance, more delusive in the attack. We can easily imagine that a country, invincible in war, may go down to its ruin amid the luxuries and somnolence of prolonged peace. Hannibal won at Thrasymenus, but he lost the fruits of victory in the vineyards and orange-groves of Campania.

The days of war, many hope, are passing away for good, and arbitration is to take its place. This may be desirable, for war is terrible. Yet, it is not easy to see what is to be so serviceable in electrifying the nation's patriotism, and communicating to it an ardor which refuses during many years to dim its glow. Certain it is, that under the reign of peace we must, in season and out of season, look to the patriotism of the country, that it suffer no diminution in vigor and earnest work.

American patriotism is needed—patriotism intense, which speaks out in noble pride, with beating heart: *Civis Americanus*—I am an American citizen; patriotism active, which shows itself in deed and in sacrifice; patriotism public-spirited, which cares for the public weal as for the apple of the eye. Private personal civic virtue is not uncommon among us; more uncommon is public civic virtue, which watches the ballot and all approaches to it, which demands that public officials do their duty, which

purifies public opinion on all matters where the country is concerned. This patriotism will save the Republic.

From whom primarily does the Republic expect this patriotism? From her veteran soldiers.

This patriotism, America, thou shalt have. I speak for veterans. I speak for their brother-citizens.

Noblest ship of state, sail thou on over billows, and through storms, undaunted, imperishable! Of thee I do not say: "*Cæsarem vehis*—thou carriest Cæsar." But of thee I say: "*Libertatem vehis*—thou carriest Liberty." Within thy bulwarks the fair goddess is enthroned, holding in her hands the dreams and hopes of humanity. Oh! for her sake, guard well thyself. Sail thou on, peerless ship, safe from shoals and malign winds, ever strong in keel, ever beauteous in prow and canvas, ever guided by heaven's polar star! Sail thou on, I pray thee, undaunted and imperishable!



LEO XIII.

TO THE RULERS AND PEOPLE OF THE WORLD THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF

ADDRESSES AN ENCYCLICAL WHICH CALLS NATIONS, AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALS, TO ENTER INTO THE BOSOM OF THE CHURCH—THE ONLY MEANS BY WHICH THE GREAT EVILS OF THE DAY CAN BE COMBATTED WITH.

THE remarkable expression of public congratulation which We received from all quarters throughout the whole of last year in commemoration of Our Episcopal Jubilee, and which were latterly brought to a climax by the remarkable piety of the Spanish pilgrims, have inspired Us with the pleasing conviction that the unity of the Church and its wonderful attachment to the Supreme Pontiff were manifested in that concord and harmony of mind. During those days the Catholic world, as if forgetful of everything else, appeared to have fixed its gaze and its thought on the palace of the Vatican. The embassies from the rulers of States, the crowds of pilgrims, the letters full of love and the sacred ceremonies openly attested that in devotion to the Holy See all Catholics were of one heart and one mind. And this was all the more acceptable and grateful because it so aptly fell in with Our designs and undertakings; for knowing the times and mindful of the demands of duty, throughout the whole course of Our Pontificate it has been Our constant purpose, and We have endeavored, as far as we could by word and deed, to bind all nations and peoples more closely to Ourselves and to place in evidence the power of the Roman Pontificate, which is salutary in every respect. We therefore feel deeply grateful and return thanks—first indeed, to God, through Whose goodness and blessing We have reached that age in sound health; and then to rulers, Bishops, the clergy and private individuals everywhere, who by numerous proofs of piety and affection have taken care to honor Our person and Our dignity, and to tender to Us personally opportune consolation.

Still much was wanting to our complete and solid comfort. For even amidst the manifestations of popular joy and attachment, the idea presented itself of the great multitude who were outside of that unanimous display of active Catholic sympathy—some because they were entirely unacquainted with the wisdom revealed in the Gospels, and others because, though Christians in name, they refuse to accept the Catholic Faith. By this thought We were and are seriously affected; nor would it be right that We should, without poignant grief, think of such a large portion of the human race who are far separated from Us and have, as it were, taken a path that leads them astray. Now, as We are on earth the Vicegerent of the Omnipotent God, who wishes all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and as both Our protracted age and the bitterness of the cares We have to bear are pressing Us toward the goal of life, it has seemed good to Us to imitate the example of Our Redeemer and Master Jesus Christ in this, that when He was just about to return to Heaven He besought God the Father with most earnest prayers that His disciples and followers should become one in mind and heart: "I pray . . . that they all may be one, as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us" (St. John xvii., 20-21). The fact that this divine prayer and appeal embraced not only those who then believed in Jesus Christ, but likewise all who were to believe in the coming times, affords Us not unsuitable ground for confidently giving utterance to Our heart's desire and endeavoring, as far as We can, to call upon and incite all men, without distinction of race or locality, to enter within the unity of divine faith.

As Our design is stimulated by charity, which succors most speedily where the need of assistance is greatest, Our thoughts are directed in the first place to those people, the most miserable of all, who have either not received the light of the Gospel at all or have lost it through negligence or the remoteness of their position, and who on that account are ignorant of God and steeped in error. Since all salvation flows from Jesus Christ—"For there is no other name under Heaven given to men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv., 12)—Our most eager desire is that every region in the globe should be imbued and filled with the Name of Jesus. In this respect the Church indeed has never failed to discharge the duty imposed upon it by God. For throughout nineteen centuries in what work has she displayed greater energy, zeal and perseverance than in leading the nations to the knowledge of truth? And at the present day heralds of the Gospel, invested with Our authority, frequently cross the seas and proceed to the most distant places; and daily We beseech God to deign to multiply sacred ministers worthy of the Apostolic office, that is men who will not hesitate to sacrifice their goods,

their safety, and life itself if required, in order to extend the kingdom of Christ.

And Thou, O Preserver and Protector of the human race, Jesus Christ, hasten and quickly accomplish the promise Thou formerly madest—that when Thou wouldst be lifted above the earth Thou wouldst draw all things to thee. Come then at length and show Thyself to the infinite multitude who yet know not of the great blessings Thou hast purchased for mortals with Thy Blood ; stir up those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death so that, enlightened by the rays of Thy virtue and wisdom they may, through Thee and by Thee, *be made perfect in one.*

Of this unity We discover a pledge in all the peoples who have been drawn by Divine piety from errors of long duration to the wisdom of the Gospel. Certainly there is nothing that is pleasanter or that tends more to show the goodness of God than the recollection of ancient times when the faith Divinely received was generally considered a common and individual patrimony ; and when the Christian faith united together in all that pertained to religion highly civilized nations that were separated from one another by place, temperament and manners, and that sometimes differed and quarrelled about other things. In dwelling on this recollection the mind is much pained by the thought that in the progress of ages suspicions were aroused and great and flourishing nations were dragged by evil conjunctures from the bosom of the Church. Whatever the result may be, relying on the grace and mercy of the Omnipotent God, Who alone knows the proper time for giving succor and Who is able and desires to bend human wills, we turn to those nations and with paternal charity exhort and beg them to settle differences and return to unity.

In the first instance We lovingly look to the East, whence came salvation in the beginning to the whole world. Assuredly We are led by Our feeling as to the prospect to entertain the favorable hope that it will not be long until the Eastern Churches, distinguished for their ancestral faith and ancient glory, will return whither they departed ; all the more because they are separated from Us by no great difference ; indeed, if a few points are excepted, We so agree with them in regard to the rest that in defending Catholicism, We not unfrequently draw evidence and arguments from the doctrine, customs and ceremonies in use among the Easterns. The primacy of the Roman Pontificate is the principal cause of difference. But let them look to the beginning ; let them see what their forefathers felt on the subject, and what the age nearest the origin of Christianity handed down. For the divine testimony of Christ : “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,” stands clearly ap-

proved from that time as applying to the Roman Pontiffs. And amongst the Pontiffs of the early ages (*Prisca ætas*) were not a few chosen from the East itself, notably Anacletus, Evaristus, Anicetus, Elutherius, Zosimus and Agatho; most of whom, carrying out the administration of the universal Christian republic in a wise and holy manner, consecrated it by the shedding of their blood. It is quite clear at what time, through what cause, and by whose efforts, unfortunate discord was created. Before that period when what God had joined was by man put asunder, the name of the Apostolic See was holy amongst all the nations of the Christian world, and East and West, harmoniously and without hesitation, used to obey the Roman Pontiff as the legitimate successor of Blessed Peter, and therefore the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. Accordingly, if we go back to the beginning of the difference, we find that Phocius himself had spokesmen on his behalf despatched to Rome; and Nicholas I., the supreme Pontiff, sent his ambassadors from the city to Constantinople, without an opposing voice being raised, *to investigate carefully the cause of the Patriarch Ignatius, and to return to the Holy See with full and correct information*; so that the whole history of the affair distinctly confirms the primacy of the Roman See, with which the disagreement then occurred. Finally, everybody is aware that at the great Councils both of Lyons and Florence, the Latins and Greeks, with ready accord and one voice, ratified as a dogma the supreme power of the Roman Pontiffs.

We have purposely recalled these things because they are, as it were, invitations to secure peace; the more so because at present We appear to notice amongst the Easterns a more conciliatory disposition towards Catholics, and even a certain inclination to kindness. This was particularly observable not long ago when We saw good offices and marks of friendship bestowed on Our people who went to the East for religious purposes.

Wherefore, *Our heart goes out to you all* who are separated from the Catholic Church, whether you are of the Greek or of any other Eastern rite. We are very anxious that you should meditate upon those grave and loving words that Bessarion addressed to your fathers: "What answer can We give God as to why We have been separated from Our brethren, Whom He descended from Heaven, became Incarnate and was Crucified to unite and gather into one flock? What shall be Our excuse to those who come after Us? Good Fathers, let Us not suffer this; let Us not continue in this opinion; let Us not consult so wretchedly for Our own interests and those of Our people." Honestly weigh by itself and before God the appeal We make. It is from no human motive but through divine charity and zeal for the salvation of all that We urge reconciliation and unity with the Roman Church; We mean a full and

perfect union, for a union which would merely bring about a certain harmony of dogmas and an interchange of fraternal charity could not by any means be such. The true union between Christians is that which Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Church, desired and established, consisting in the unity of faith and of Government. Nor is there any reason why you should fear that We or Our successors would diminish your rights, your patriarchal privileges, or the ritualistic usages of your respective Churches, since it has been and always will be an established rule in the government and designs of the Holy See to respect the origin and customs of each people, and to deal with them fairly and justly. And if there be reunion with Us, it will certainly by God's grace result in a wonderful increase of dignity and lustre to your Church. May God, then graciously hear this your own supplication: "Cause the schisms of the Churches to cease," and "Bring together the dispersed; lead back those who have gone astray and unite them to your Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" (Liturgy of St. Basil). Thus may you be restored to that one holy faith which remote antiquity by constant tradition handed down to you and to Us, which your ancestors and predecessors preserved inviolate, and upon which, owing to the *eclat* of their virtues, the grandeur of their genius, and excellence of their doctrine, splendor was nobly reflected by Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, the two Cyrils, and many others whose glory equally belongs to the East and to the West as a common inheritance.

In this place We may be allowed to address ourselves especially to you, inhabitants of the Slav countries, whose renown is attested by many historical monuments. You know how much the Slavs are indebted to your fathers in the faith, SS. Cyril and Methodius, to whose memory We Ourselves some years ago paid a tribute of well-deserved honor. For many of your race their virtues and labors were the source of civilization and salvation. Whence arose between Slavonia and the Roman Pontiffs that exchange of kindly deeds on the one hand and stanch fidelity on the other which was displayed for so long a period. And if the deplorable misfortune of the times alienated a large number of your ancestors from the Roman communion, think of what importance it is to return to unity. The Church, too, continues to recall you to its fold, and to offer you abundant assurances of salvation, prosperity and grandeur.

With no less charity do We look to the peoples whom at a more recent date a certain and unusual change (*conversio*) in the times and in the affairs of men separated from the Roman Church. Consigning to oblivion the vicissitudes of the past, let them lift their thoughts above human considerations, and, with minds eager alone for truth and salvation, let them consider the Church founded by Christ. If they will compare their

own religious communities with it and take note of the condition of religion amongst them, they will freely admit that in failing to observe primitive tradition they have through various erroneous steps glided into novelties ; nor will they deny that of what may be called the patrimony of truth, which the leaders of the religious revolution took away with them on their secession, scarcely a single formula of faith enforced with certainty and authority survives amongst them. Nay, it has come to this, that many are not ashamed to tear away the very foundation on which alone rests religion and the entire hope of mortals, that is the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ, the Saviour. In the same way, to the Books of the Old and New Testaments, which they heretofore affirmed were written with Divine inspiration, they now deny this authority, a consequence which, no doubt was altogether inevitable when each one was given the power of interpretation according to his private opinion and judgment.

Hence followed the fact of each individual conscience becoming its own guide and standard of life, every other rule of conduct being rejected ; hence, too, arose contradictory opinions and the multiplication of sects, often ending in the acceptance of the tenets of *naturalism* and *rationalism*. Accordingly, despairing of agreement in doctrine, they now preach and advocate the union of fraternal charity ; and this, indeed, very properly, since we all ought to be bound together by mutual charity, for this, above everything, Jesus Christ commanded, and He wished it to be the mark of His followers that they should love one another. But how can perfect charity unite men's hearts if their minds have not been harmonized by faith ? For these reasons a number of those to whom We refer, persons of sound judgment and seekers after truth, have sought the sure way of salvation in the Catholic Church, as they clearly understood that they could not possibly be united to Jesus Christ as the Head, without adhering to His body, which is the Church, nor possess the true faith of Christ whilst repudiating the legitimate *magisterium* confided to Peter and his successors. They plainly perceived that in the Roman Church alone were realized the appearance and image of the true Church, visible to all through the marks impressed upon it by God, its Author. And amongst these Catholics there are many endowed with keen judgment and with a singular capacity for the investigation of antiquity who, by admirable writings, have proved the continuity of the Roman Church from the days of the Apostles, the integrity of its doctrines, and the constancy of its discipline. With the example of such men before Us, it is with Our heart rather than with Our voice, that We appeal to you, brethren, who have now for three centuries been at variance with us respecting the Catholic faith, and to all you who, from whatever cause, have

been separated from us. "Let us all meet into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (Eph. iv., 13). Permit Us to hold out the hand to you lovingly and invite you within that unity which has never been and never can be wanting to the Catholic Church. The Church, our common mother, has long been calling you back to herself; the Catholics throughout the world expect you, with fraternal longing, to come and piously worship God with Us, and to be united to Us in perfect charity by the profession of one Gospel, one Faith and one Hope.

To conclude the expression of Our wishes on the subject of unity, it remains to address Ourselves to those who, in whatever part of the world they may be, are so constantly awake to Our thoughts and solitudes; We mean Catholics whom the profession of the Roman faith makes subject to the Apostolic See, as it holds them united to Jesus Christ. We have no need of exhorting them to be united to the Holy and true Church, for the Divine goodness has already made them participants in it. However, We must warn them to beware of increasing perils on all sides, and to take care not to lose through negligence and indolence that supreme gift of God. For that purpose let them draw inspiration from the instructions which We, Ourselves, have addressed to Catholic nations, both in general and particular, and let them find therein, according to circumstances, principles to shape their thoughts and rules to guide their conduct. Above all, let them make it a sovereign law to conform, trustfully and unreservedly, with good heart and ready willingness, to all the Church's teachings and prescriptions. Let them realize, in this subject, how disastrous it has been to Christian unity that false ideas, so prevalent, have been able to obscure, and even efface, in many minds the real conception of the Church. The Church, by the will and order of God, its Founder, is a perfect society of its kind, a society whose mission and *role* are to infuse into mankind Gospel precepts and teaching, to safeguard moral integrity and the exercise of the Christian virtues, and thus to lead all men to that Heavenly happiness which is offered to them. And because it is a perfect society, as We have said, it is endowed with a principle of life which does not come to it from without, but has been deposited in it by the very act of will which gave it being. For the same reason it is invested with the power of making laws, and in the exercise of that power it is just that it should be free; as it is just, moreover, in all that, on any account, is derived from its authority. This freedom, nevertheless, is not of a nature to excite rivalry and antagonism, for the Church neither covets power nor is swayed by any ambition; but what it wants, what alone it seeks, is to safeguard the exercise of virtue among men, and by this means insure their eternal salvation. So its character leads it to be quite maternal in its condescension and behavior. More-

over, sharing the vicissitudes of every society, it foregoes the full exercise of its rights, as conventions often made with different States abundantly testify. Nothing is further from its thoughts than to wish to encroach upon the rights of civil authority; but the latter, in return, ought to respect the rights of the Church and refrain from usurping them in the least. And now, if we consider what is occurring in our time, what is the dominant current? To regard the Church with suspicion, cast disdain, hatred and odious incriminations upon it, is the habit of too many; and what is much more serious, they are exhausting every expedient and every effort to subject it to the yoke of civil authority. Hence, confiscation of its property and restriction of its liberties; hence, trammels on the education of aspirants to the priesthood, exceptional laws against the clergy, the dissolution and interdiction of religious societies, those valuable auxiliaries of the Church; hence, in a word, a restoration, a very recrudescence of all the regalian principles and proceedings. That is to violate the rights of the Church, and at the same time bring about lamentable catastrophes for society, because it is to openly contravene the designs of God. God, the Creator and King of the world, who, in His providence, has established for the government of human society both civil and sacred power, willed, undoubtedly, that they should be distinct, but has forbidden any rupture and conflict between them. It is not enough to say the Divine Will demands, as well as the general good of society, that the civil power should harmonize with the ecclesiastical power. Thus, the State has its rights and duties, the Church its own, but between both are the links of a close concord. Thus, one would assuredly succeed in removing the uneasiness that is felt in the relations between Church and State, a baneful uneasiness on more than one account, and so much lamented by all good men. One would equally succeed, without confusion or separation of rights, in getting citizens to "render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and to God that which is God's."

Another great peril to unity is the Masonic sect, a formidable power which has long oppressed nations, and particularly Catholic nations. Insolently proud of its power, its resources and its successes, it sets every agency at work to everywhere strengthen and extend its dominions, favored by the troubled state of the times. From dark retreats, in which it lays its plots and snares, it comes out into the broad light of our cities, and, as if to hurl defiance at God, it is, in this very city, the capital of the Catholic world, it has established its headquarters. What is most deplorable is, that wherever it sets foot, it makes its way into all classes and all institutions of the State, to become, if possible, sovereign arbiter of everything. This is the most deplorable, We say, for both the perversity of its opinions and the iniquity of its designs are flagrant. Under color of vin-

dicating the rights of man and reforming society, it demolishes Christian institutions, repudiates every revealed doctrine, stigmatizes as superstitions religious duties, sacraments, and everything sacred, strives to deprive of their Christian character marriage, the family, the education of youth, and everything relating to public and private life, as well as to abolish all respect for human and divine power in the minds of the people. The worship it prescribes is the worship of nature, and it is the principles of nature it proposes as the sole means and standard of truth, honesty and justice. Thus, obviously, man is urged, to the adoption of the manners and habits of an almost pagan life, if the increasing and subtle seductions should not cause him to descend lower.

Although on this point We have already elsewhere given the gravest warnings, Our apostolic vigilance imposes upon Us the duty of insisting thereon and repeating again and again that one can never be too strongly fortified against such a pressing danger. May the divine clemency bring to nought these wicked designs! But let the Christian people understand that they must put an end to this sect and once for all throw off its dishonoring yoke; let those who suffer most from it, Italians and French, be the more earnest. We, ourselves, have already said what weapons they should use, and what tactics they should pursue in the struggle; the victory, with a Chief like Him who said, "I have overcome the world" (John xvi. 33), is not doubtful.

This double danger overcome and society brought back to the unity of the faith, a marvelous abundance of good and efficacious remedies for existing evils would flow therefrom. We will indicate the principal.

We commence with what touches the dignity and *role* of the Church. The Church would resume the honorable rank to which it is entitled, and, free and respected, it would pursue its way, sowing around it truth and grace, which would result in the happiest effects to society; for, established by God to instruct and guide mankind, the Church, more efficaciously than any one, can turn to the common advantage the most profound transformations of time, supply the true solution to the most complicated questions, and promote the reign of right and justice, the firmest foundations of society. As a consequence, a *reapproachment* among nations would be brought about, a most desirable thing in our epoch to prevent the horrors of war. We have before our eyes the European situation. For already a number of years a peace more apparent than real is seen. A prey to mutual suspicion, almost all nations are rivaling each other in preparations for war. Thoughtless youth are thrown into the midst of the dangers of military life, far removed from paternal advice and guidance. Robust young men are taken from work in the fields, from noble studies, from commerce and art and made to

serve several years as soldiers. Hence the enormous expenditure and the depletion of the public treasury ; hence, too, a fatal injury is inflicted on the wealth of nations as well as on private fortunes ; and they have reached that point that they can no longer bear the burden of this armed peace. Is that the natural condition of society ? Now it would be impossible to get over this crisis and enter on an era of true peace except through the beneficent intervention of Jesus Christ ; for to repress ambition, covetousness, and the spirit of rivalry—that triple fire by which war is generally enkindled—nothing would avail better than the Christian virtues, and particularly justice. Do they wish that the law of nations be respected and the obligations of treaties inviolably kept, that the ties of brotherhood be drawn closer and made firmer—let everyone be persuaded of this truth that “ justice exalteth a nation ” (Prov. xiv., 34.)

Internally, the renovation of which We speak would give more assured and stronger guarantees for public security than laws and armed force could supply. Everyone sees the dangers which threaten the lives of citizens, and the tranquility of States daily aggravated ; and a succession of horrible outrages must certainly have opened the eyes of all who doubt the existence of seditious factions conspiring for the overthrow and ruin of society. A double question is exercising minds to-day, the social question and the political question, and both are assuredly very grave. Now, however praiseworthy may be the study, experience, and measures brought to bear to get a wise solution conformable to justice, nothing can equal the Christian faith awakening in the minds of the people the sentiment of duty, and giving them the courage to fulfil it. It was in this sense not long ago We especially dealt with the social question, resting at once upon the principles of the Gospel and natural reason. As to the political question, to conciliate freedom and powder—two things often confounded in theory and widely separated in practice—Christian education has a power marvellously far-reaching. For this incontestible principle once laid down that whatever may be the form of government, authority always emanates from God, reason recognizes in the one the legitimate right to command, and imposes on others the correlative right to obey. This obedience cannot be prejudicial to human dignity since, properly speaking, it is God is obeyed rather than man ; and God has reserved His most rigorous judgments for those who rule if they do not represent His authority conformably to right and justice. On the other hand, individual liberty cannot be suspected nor odious to anyone, for absolutely inoffensive, it will not deviate from what is true and just and in harmony with public tranquillity. In fine, if one considers what the Church is capable of in its character or mother and mediatrix between peoples and governments, called into existence to help both

by its authority and its counsels, it will be understood how important it is that all nations should resolve, in matters of the Christian faith, to adopt the same sentiment and the same profession.

While Our mind is fixed on these thoughts and Our heart earnestly desires their realization, We see in the distant future a new order of things unfolded, and We know nothing more delightful than the contemplation of the immense benefits which would be the natural result. The mind can hardly conceive the powerful influence which would suddenly take possession of every nation and bear them on towards the summit of all greatness and prosperity, when peace and tranquillity would be established, when the progress of literature would be favored, when among agriculturists, workmen, and the industrial classes would be founded, on the Christian basis which we have indicated, new societies capable of suppressing usury and widening the field of useful labor.

The virtue of these benefits cannot be restricted to the confines of civilized nations, but it would extend far beyond like a river superabundantly fertilizing. For, it is necessary to consider what We said in the beginning, that numberless people are waiting from age to age, for those who will bring them the light of truth and civilization. No doubt, in what concerns the eternal salvation of peoples, the counsels of divine wisdom are hidden from human intelligence; nevertheless, if unhappy superstitions still reign on so many shores, it must for the most part be imputed to religious quarrels. For, as far as human reason can judge by events, it appears evident that it is to Europe God has assigned the *role* of gradually diffusing over the earth the benefits of Christian civilization. This grand work, the heritage of previous ages, was happily and progressively proceeding when, in the sixteenth century, discord suddenly broke out. Then Christendom was rent asunder by quarrels and dissensions; Europe exhausted its strength in intestine wars and struggles; and from that disturbed period, apostolic expeditions sustained a fatal check. The causes of discord being permanent amongst us, what is there surprising that a very large portion of men should still abandon themselves to inhuman customs and rites condemned by reason. Let us all labor, then, with equal ardor, to restore ancient concord to the profit of all. For the restoration of this concord, as well as the propagation of the Gospel, the times through which we are passing seem eminently propitious; for the sentiment of human brotherhood never more deeply penetrated minds, and no age ever saw men more anxious to inquire into the condition of their fellows, to know them and succor them; one never traversed with such rapidity immense distances by land and sea—valuable advantages not only for commerce and the exploration of savants, but also for the diffusion of the Divine Word.

We are not unmindful of the long and painful labors which the order of things we would wish to see restored demands ; and more than one perhaps will think that We are too hopeful, and that We are pursuing an ideal which is more to be wished than awaited. But We put all our hope and confidence in Jesus Christ, Saviour of mankind, remembering the great things that the folly of the Cross and its preaching formerly accomplished in presence of the wisdom of the world, amazed and confounded.

We beg in particular, princes and rulers, by their political clear-sightedness and their solicitude for the interests of the people, to form an equitable appreciation of Our designs, and to second them with their good will and their authority. Should only one part of the fruits We expect reach maturity, it would be no slight benefit in the midst of such a rapid decline all round, when the uneasiness of the present is joined to the apprehension of the future.

The last century left Europe exhausted with its disasters still trembling from the convulsions which had agitated it. This century, which is drawing to a close, is it not *vice versa*, transmitting as a heritage to mankind some pledges of concord and a hope of great benefits which the community of the Christian faith promises ?


May that God, rich in mercy, in whose power are the times and the moments, deign in His infinite goodness, to hearken to Our wishes and hasten the fulfilment of that promise of Jesus Christ, "And there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." (John x., 16.)

Given at Rome, near St. Peter's, the twentieth day of June of the year 1894, of Our Pontificate the Seventeenth.

LEO XIII., POPE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ESSENTIAL TO THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING AND PROPER USE OF THE FOLLOWING WORK.

HE present treatise was first compiled for the particular use of an illustrious personage of rank and station, and as it was considered, by those who are to direct my actions, that it might be conducive to the good of all; that, then, you may make the proper use of it which I intend, consider attentively the following advice, regarding the holy sacrifice of the Mass, which is the true fountain of the glories of Jesus, and the source of all His graces to man.

Endeavor to hear Mass every day, if health and circumstances will permit you. Let neither heat nor cold, company nor pastime, sloth nor indifference, the fading world nor its pursuits, hinder you from it. It will be little more than half an hour each day given to God, who gives you all; it is much that God, who promises you rewards exceedingly great, should be content with so little. Many have escaped great dangers for having repaired to the church to hear Mass, yet it is better to hear it for the pure motive of God's glory than for any self-interest; if you wish truly to please God, direct all your actions to His honor. Do not say, "I am not bound to hear Mass every day," for neither is God bound to do you many favors, and to preserve you from many dangers: if, then, God does for you more than He is bound to do, do you for Him more than you are bound to do.

To do things only because you are bound comes rather from servile fear than from filial love; he that hears Mass only on Sundays and holydays would omit it then, too, if he could save his soul otherwise. Do not say, "I have too much to do," etc., as if the service of God were none of your employments, as if business would be worse done for having begged God's assistance to go through it. Do not say, "I cannot lose so much time in the morning; my affairs are too many;" nothing is too much where all is due; half an hour is well spent where eternity is promised.

Henry the Third of England had more to do than you, having a kingdom to govern, and yet he could find time to hear three high masses every day. King David was a greater and a busier man than you, and yet he could find leisure to praise God seven times a day; nay, rather than fail in such a duty, he would rise at midnight to sing His praises. All the employments of a court could not hinder David from becoming a saint, and the follies and joys of this fading world must hinder you from becoming even a tolerable Christian. Do not say, "Such devotions belong to cloisters; another course is necessary for people in the world." Do not say, "I cannot rise to hear Mass;" it is too soon to rise for those who do not go to bed at night, but in the morning; but this is not to live like men, but like bats and owls. He that has a mind to change day thus into night would do well to change also his hemisphere; it is at the antipodes, only, that a person may go to bed without disedification at the time that we are rising.

Say not, in fine, "It is too far to the church; it is too cold to go thither; it rains," etc.; for it is your devotion that is too cold, not the weather; it is you that are too far from God, not the church from you. Three kings came from the east, thirteen days' journey, in the depth of winter, to adore our Saviour in Bethlehem; and you, fine lady or gentleman, think it too far to go a few minutes' walk to adore your Saviour on His altar. Having received from God the best of earthly blessings, plenty and ease, be ashamed not to give Him the first-fruits of the day, and the best of your services. Either return Him what is His, or due thanks for them. Be either more grateful to Him, or less beholden. What a shame, to owe all to Him, and pay Him nothing! It is unpardonable presumption to expect from Him daily bread, and yet refuse Him daily praise.

Now, if a saint of the primitive Church, by God's permission and power, were sent down from heaven, and should see with what presumption some of our slothful fine ones expect to get to heaven by serving God half an hour a week, and that without love or devotion, surely he would be astonished at how cheap a rate they intend to purchase those inestimable treasures which cost Him, and all who reign with Him in glory, so much sweat and blood. Break, then, through the chains of sloth, which weigh you down; and if God gives you grace to shake off the demon of sloth and his spiritual lethargy, give Him the honor of it, and say to Him, with David, "You have broken my chains, I will sacrifice to you an offering of praise." If you be really thus disposed to offer a daily sacrifice of praise to God, do it in the following manner:

On entering the church, leave all your distractions at the door; make a truce with the affairs of the boisterous world for half an hour; appease

your passions ; compose your body and countenance ; let your looks be serious, pious and recollected ; perch not on a stool, nor lean slothfully on a form, with your head reclined upon your hands, as if you intended rather to imitate Peter sleeping in the garden, than Christ praying there. Kneel not on one knee, as if mocking Christ, and acting the Jew's part, who spat on our Saviour's face ; He, to whom all honor and glory is due, will not be content with half-worshiping ; gaze not about you—you are in the house of God, which ought to be a house of profound prayer ; you are in the church, not in the street ; at Mass, not at a ball. In fine, let your eyes be modestly fixed, either upon the ceremonies, or upon this little book ; let your head be humbly bent, like those angels seen in a vision encompassing the altar, as St. Chrysostom relates in his sixth book on the priesthood.

Avoid, as much as possible, all coughing, spitting, sighing, sobbing, and loud praying, but especially all talking and whispering in the church. How edifying to behold a large congregation at Mass ! what a fine sight to see so many kneel and rise, and adore together in silence, as if animated by the Spirit of God, or as if they had but one heart and one soul, like the primitive Christians.

The design proposed in this little work is, to instruct such pious souls as aspire to perfection, rather by the way of love than of precept ; they will find in it many addresses and appeals to the affections, which regard the three states of a spiritual life, the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive ; and it is hoped the Holy Ghost will finish the work. The same order is observed as God Himself commonly observes in leading souls to the perfection of His love.

First, He causes them to conceive a great hatred for the disorders of their past life, and inspires them with sentiments of contrition, like those expressed in the prayer to "Jesus crucified," and the act of "Reparation of honor to our Lord Jesus Christ, in the most adorable sacrament of our altar," contained in the first part of this book, where is also laid down the great difference between our Saviour's life and ours, to excite our compunction the more ; with short acts of the principal virtues.

Second, as our Lord is the true model of every virtue, especially of love, in order to excite us the more to love and imitate Him it is shown in the second part, by way of meditation, how amiable our blessed Jesus is ; how much He loves us, and how little we love Him.

And lastly, as He is the way that leads to the Father, and that it is His love that conducts us to divine love, we shall find, in the third part, most powerful motives thereto, most devout contemplations and pious litanies and other exercises, to obtain it of God, and to enable us to practice it in the most excellent manner ; especially in the holy sacrifice of

the Mass, and in holy Communion, which is the most perfect bond of union here below between the Christian soul and its God.

I am assured that they who practice these devotions will soon experience the abundant fruit of them and make rapid progress in the ways of divine love. But one of the greatest advantages of this little book is this, that such as are in the habit of meditation, and often experience little relish in it, may here find wherewithal to entertain themselves easily, and nourish their devotion; and that they who have already tasted how sweet it is, may meet with an easy method to attain a high degree of contemplation.

THE GLORIES OF JESUS.

THE FIRST PART.

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF A PURGATIVE LIFE.

A Devout Prayer to Jesus crucified, to excite us to Contrition.



MY God! I acknowledge to you that I have been, and still am, hardened and insensible to all your benefits and attractions of love; I have had a heart of stone, not of human sensibility, much less of a Christian. I have had neither fear nor love for you—if I had, would I have offended you as I have done?

But, O my God! if it be your good pleasure, grant me the favor you have promised your own; take from me this flinty heart, this heart of stone, and give me a feeling one, one willing to be moved by your instructions and grace.

It is for you, O my God, who have changed rocks into fountains of water, and drawn springs out of hard stone, to work this change in me. Use in my regard your all-powerful goodness, strike my heart with the attractions of your love, and cause torrents of tears to gush forth.

O my God! it is but just I should imitate the prophet David, and after having so much offended you, my bread should be the bread of weeping, and my drink tears in abundance, and my only nourishment day and night.

O my Saviour, since the rocks were split asunder, and the graves were opened at your death, it is but just that my heart, too, should break with sorrow, and my breast should burst with sighs, and my eyes should be turned into fountains of water, for having so much offended you, who shed for me all the blood of your veins.

O Jesus, the corner-stone in the heavenly Jerusalem, the foundation stone, breaking to pieces all that resist you, break down the obduracy of my heart; spare it not; grief, sorrow, sighs, tears, compunction, penance,

mercy, is all I ask of you ; refuse me not ; this is what you require of me, and what I expect from you, and beg of your infinite goodness.

It is but just that my sorrows should equal my sins ; but, alas, they have been numberless and my repentance trifling. Oh, that I could contain within my soul the groans of David, the sighs of Magdalen, the tears of St. Peter, the repentance of St. Augustine, the grief of all other illustrious penitents, who of sinners became great saints !

Teach me, O Lord, that sin deserves infinite hatred ; Oh, that I could hate it as it deserves ! O my Jesus, that I could have the infinite sorrow and hatred for my sins that you have had ! but as I have not, and cannot have it, I humbly offer you all you have given me, in union with your own.

I know there is a vast disparity between my sins and my repentance for them ; and would to God my sorrow surpassed my crimes ! but as you were pleased, my divine Saviour, not only to enlighten our souls with pure light, but to lead them to grace and love, I entreat you to carry my will as far as my knowledge ; and as I know by faith that you are infinite goodness and loveliness, I desire, by the help of your grace, to love you infinitely. And as I understand, also, that sin contains in itself an infinite malice, as it were, I desire, with the help of your grace, to conceive an unfeigned hatred for it ; yes, my God, I desire to direct all my will to the love of you, and to the hatred of sin.

But, O my sweet Jesus, if my grief does not equal my sins, yours infinitely surpasses them, and is capable of blotting out the sins of a million of worlds ; for this reason I offer you all your own detestation of sin, and it is through it I hope from the eternal Father, and from you, the pardon of all my sins. Dear Jesus, neither suffer my sorrow to be insincere, nor my hopes vain.

If your most faithful servants have beaten their breasts so violently at the thought of their sins, and of your goodness, it is but just, my Saviour, that, at the sight of the sad state to which my sins have reduced me, I should even tear my breast in the bitterness of my soul, crying out, "Mercy, Jesus, mercy !"

O tender Father, behold here your prodigal child.

O charitable Shepherd, behold your lost sheep.

O adorable Saviour, with your blood you purchased me.

Suffer it not to be shed in vain.

Looking at the feet of the Crucifix, say,

O my Saviour, for the rest of my days, may I be fixed, like holy Magdalen, at the foot of the cross, that my feet may never walk one step out of your holy ways.

Looking at the hands, say,

O my God, may I never offend you with my hands, seeing yours were pierced with nails for the ill use I have made of mine.

Looking at the side, say,

O my Jesus, that my heart would pass through this wound into yours, or that yours would pass into mine, to the end that I may live in you, and you in me, and that I may never be separated from you.

Looking at the heart, say,

O Heart of Jesus, drowned in sorrows for my vain joys. Heart of Jesus, loaded with heaviness for my sinful pastimes. Heart of Jesus, seized with fears for the rashness of my desires. Heart of Jesus, covered with confusion for the shame of my sins. Heart of Jesus, wounded with infinite dolours for the enormity of my crimes. O Heart of Jesus, pierced a thousand times by the number of my disorders †

O Heart of Jesus, sweet, tender, peaceful, compassionate, sincere, charitable, and faithful ; O furnace of love ! O treasure of all graces ! O amiable and endless source of all the sorrows of love that ever did, do, or will enter the hearts of men, infuse into my miserable heart all that sorrow, grief, affliction, and sighing, which you fostered in the hearts of so many holy penitents.

As my heart has sinned as much as theirs, why should it not be filled with as much sorrow ? May a holy contrition emanate from the heart of Jesus into mine, with dispositions to receive it. May tears, O Jesus, flow in abundance, accompanied with sorrow, shame, hatred, and love. A Saviour so lovely and so loving, but so little loved, and so much offended.

Here hold yourself in humble and respectful silence before God. Then say to your own heart,

Oh, miserable heart of mine, all defiled with sin, filled with malice, swollen with pride, poisoned with self-love ! Oh, heart filled with vices, and wholly devoid of virtues ! Oh, heart, all open to sentiments of nature, and wholly closed against motions of grace ! So covetous, and at the same time so prodigal ; so sparing toward the Creator, and so lavish to the creature ! Oh, heart, so beloved of Jesus, and loving Jesus so little !

Oh, my poor heart, foul, libertine, impious, ungrateful, envious, covetous, sensual, choleric, revengeful, slothful, negligent, miserable, earthly heart, so sensible to everything that relates to the world, and so insensible to your own disorders ; so yielding to your own passions, and so hardened to all divine inspirations. Oh, wicked, treacherous heart ; heart of stone, nay, harder than the very rocks, for they afford the richest fountains of water, and you, with much difficulty, afford a few drops of tears, even at the very season when you see your Saviour, covered with streams

of blood, shed in His agony and bloody sweat in the garden, in His unmerciful scourging, and in His crucifixion for your sake.

To the heart of Jesus, and your own heart, say,

What difference between hearts! between your heart, O Jesus, and mine!—yours pure, mine foul—yours patient, mine impatient—yours soft, mine inflexible—yours faithful, mine perfidious—your heart benign, mine malignant—yours noble, mine base—yours all holiness, mine wickedness—yours constant in doing good, mine inconstant in good, and constant only in the working of iniquity.

Oh, what vast and endless difference! But suffer me, O my dear Saviour, to tell you in all humility and sincerity that you have taken a heart by nature like mine, that mine by grace might become like yours.

Well, then, my adorable Redeemer, if it be your good pleasure, render my heart like yours. Yours is pure, make mine pure too; create a clean heart within me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels; yours is humble, make mine so too; your heart is docile, sincere, good-natured, overflowing with love, and free from guile; make mine so likewise, O Master of hearts. May your heart, O Jesus, wholly possess mine, and may mine wholly melt into yours.

O my Jesus, let our hearts be no longer two, but one—one faithful, devout, gracious, charitable, and holy heart; this, O my Saviour, shall henceforth be my whole study and endeavor—to entertain nothing in my heart but what finds place in yours, namely, humility, purity, patience, fortitude, charity, and love. Nothing but Jesus and His love; my heart is no longer mine: it entirely belongs to Jesus.

Dilate and expand it as you please, it is wholly yours; happy for me had it been always so; but by your grace it is so now, and shall ever be. O heart of Jesus! O love of Jesus! forever Jesus!

Here repose in silence and love.

Acts of Reparation of Honor to our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sacrament of His love.

Praised be the holy name of Jesus in the adorable sacrament!

My God, my Saviour, my Lord Jesus Christ, with all my heart I adore you, and all your infinite perfections, in the most adorable sacrament of our altars, in atonement for all my irreverence and enormous and innumerable impieties, and all those that have been committed against it since its first institution, and shall ever be committed.

Yes, O my God, I adore you in the sacrament of your love. Oh, that I could pay you all the homage you deserve! But as far as I am able, with your assistance, I desire to do it with all the perfection a creature is capable of.

To enable me the better to fulfill this sacred duty, I beseech you, my dear Saviour, that the perpetual adoration of your holy mysteries, already so widely extended and established in so many places through the zeal of fervent priests and pious bishops, may become more general all over the world, but especially in this country; and that all its associates may acquit themselves faithfully of so sacred a function; that as you are incessantly on our altars through love for us, we may untiringly crowd about them to pay you, one for the other, the tribute of our adoration and love.

I adore you, then, my God, wherever you repose in these august mysteries, for myself and for all mankind, for all my associates in the "perpetual adoration," for all devoted to your love in the blessed sacrament, for all those who never adored you in it, nor ever will, nor do at present.

I adore you, in particular, O my amiable Saviour, for all heretics, schismatics, impious atheists, blasphemers, sorcerers, magicians, Jews, Mahometans and idolaters. I adore you for all who neglect to receive you, and deprive themselves of so great an advantage, some by not celebrating, others by not communicating; for all who receive you unworthily, or, after having received you in the state of grace, have shamefully obliged you to depart by mortal sin, and for all those who offend you at present or shall offend you to the end of time.

I adore you, my Saviour, in reparation of so many immodesties daily committed in your divine presence in our churches; for all those who have neglected to hear Mass, to visit you in the holy sacrament, and to adore you when you are exposed for "benediction;" for all those who offend you at present or will ever offend you by their neglect, irreverence or impiety.

Lastly, my God, I adore you in the sacrament of your love for all those who do not acknowledge you present there, and for those who acknowledge your presence, but do not adore you; and I desire to make at present as many acts of faith, love, adoration, thanks, and atonement as were ever committed of impiety against your divine Majesty; wishing, with all the affection of my heart, to love, bless, praise and adore you in your sacred mysteries for ages of ages, as much as you are neglected and offended by sinners and reprobates, on earth or in hell.

O my God, with the most profound respect and humility I join in love and adoration with the whole Church, triumphant, militant and suffering, humbly beseeching you to accept the offering I make you, and to grant me the favor to be able to appear often before you in this adorable sacrament; to adore you so humbly, receive you so purely, and preserve you so faithfully during my whole life, that after my death you may vouch-

safe to call me to yourself, and lodge me in your paradise, there to adore you forever, with all the blessed. Amen.

Serious Reflections on the opposition of our lives to the holy life of Jesus.

Jesus Christ has suffered hunger and thirst, and I am not ashamed to eat and drink to excess.

Jesus Christ had His sacred hands and feet pierced with nails, and I employ mine in working iniquity, and in walking in the ways of unrighteousness.

Jesus Christ had His pure and virginal body torn and mangled, and I have the sacrilegious impiety to defile mine.

Jesus had His tongue and lips drenched with vinegar and gall, and I seek to gratify mine with a thousand forbidden delights and wicked defilements.

Jesus was humble and patient, and I am still proud and hasty.

Jesus was silent, and answered not a word when struck and reviled, and I can suffer nothing without crying out with the utmost impatience, as though I suffered the greatest wrongs.

Jesus prayed for His executioners, and I am ever ready to fly in the face of those who do me the least injury.

Jesus, for the love of me, abides day and night in the blessed sacrament, and I am weary of spending a few moments with Him to adore Him, and am often so ungrateful as to offend Him in His temple.

Jesus has prayed so devoutly for me, and I pray so carelessly for myself.

Jesus remains constantly in His Church for my sake, and I cannot stay with Him for a moment without quitting Him in thought, and thinking of earthly things.

Jesus loads me daily with benefits, and I constantly afflict Him by my crimes and offences.

Jesus led a life of poverty and sufferings, and I am constantly seeking my own ease and convenience, and if thus my whole life be in direct opposition to His, what must I expect from Him at the hour of my death?

[As Mary is styled the Refuge of Sinners, and may be justly called a city of refuge for all those who are outlawed, the holy rosary, of which she is the Queen, is a most excellent devotion for all sinners who would enter into the ways of justice, and may be said, in meditating on the following acts of the principal virtues.]

On the Cross.

O good cross, O precious cross, may He who has redeemed me by you receive me into heaven by you!

On the first decade bead.

My God, I detest all my past sins: at present I open my heart to all your graces, and henceforth I desire to live and die in your love and service.

On the little grains.

1. O my God, you are infinitely good and amiable; I am therefore sincerely sorry for having offended you, and I would willingly feel all the compunction and affliction of heart of all creatures.

2. My God, I renounce from this moment all my evil habits, and form the most determined resolution to leave them forever.

3. O my God, I believe all you have taught, and that your Church teaches, with all the faith that ever enlivened any one's devotion.

4. O my God, I hope in your infinite goodness as firmly as ever any one did, does, or shall do, to the end of time.

5. O my God, I love you, and desire to love you more than all creatures.

6. O my God, I sincerely thank you for all your benefits and favors, with the utmost sense of gratitude.

7. O my God, I offer you, in union with the merits of your divine Son, all the acts of virtue of all the saints and of all creatures.

8. My God, I resign myself into your divine hands, to suffer for your love all the afflictions that have or will be endured by all creatures.

9. My God, I entreat you for all the necessities of the living, the dying and the dead, with all the earnestness that ever any creature used in his addresses to you, or shall ever use to the end of the world.

10. My God, I will be yours, and desire to be yours, with all the earnest desires of all creatures to the end of the world, to an infinite extent, and for all eternity.

On the last decade bead.

Holy Virgin, Mother of mercy, be pleased to entreat your divine Son to have mercy on us. Mercy, Jesus, mercy! Be unto us a Saviour—Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

O Mary, you desire so much to see sinners converted and live; this is one favor I earnestly ask of you, to obtain for me a true and sincere conversion, through the sufferings and merits of your dear Son; and through that grief you felt on Calvary, when you beheld Jesus expire on the cross, obtain for me a happy death, that by expiring in the friendship of Jesus, I may come to love Him and you forever in heaven. Amen.

Select Devotions to excite Sorrow, Compunction, and Love.

O my divine Saviour, I give you sincere thanks for waiting so long for my repentance, else I might now have been in hell; I am sorry for having offended you, as time has been given me to repent, and it grieves

me to think on my past ingratitude, and my forgetfulness of you ; now I turn to you for mercy, and grant that I may ever love you more than all things else, nay, more than myself.

May I live for you alone, my Redeemer, who died on the cross for the love of me.

O Jesus, separate my heart from this world before death severs me from all ; give me the aid of your grace, as you know my weakness, to enable me to die to all things but to you, my sovereign good, with whom I hope to live for ever. Ah, let me not be confounded, but rather be converted and live a life of love. How often, O my God, have I deserved eternal death ! Oh, that I never had offended you ! Many years of my life are already past, and death is near at hand, and what good have I done for eternity ?

Jesus died for my sins, and will I, ungrateful sinner, continue to offend Him ? But, my Redeemer, away with my monstrous ingratitude ! away with my miserable and depraved inclinations, that so often enslaved me ! I renounce them henceforth for love of you. I shall ever bear in mind your bitter death ; grant that I may ever love you, and never offend you.

Make me sensible, O my God, of the injustice I have been guilty of in turning my back upon you, my sovereign good, and going after empty creatures. Grant me true compunction of heart to deplore forever my past ingratitude. O that I had died rather than ever have offended you ! Suffer me no longer to live unmindful of your love for me. I love you above all things, and desire so to love you for ever.

The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever. He was angry for my sins, but still was mindful of His mercy, and had pity on me. He said, "Be converted to your God, and live." O accursed sin, which made me lose my God, how much I do abhor and detest you ! I turn my whole self to you, my Lord and my God, and I repent with my whole soul for having so long despised you ; grant me the grace of final perseverance.

O my God, that I had always loved you ! What now remains for me, after so many years spent in sin, but a troubled spirit and remorse of conscience ? I will spend the rest of my life in bewailing my black ingratitude to so good and tender a father, and in loving you, my God and my all, my only good.

What will it avail me to have been happy here, if, hereafter, I should be miserable for all eternity ? But what folly and blindness, to know that on life depends eternity, and that an ill-spent life is the forerunner of eternal woes ! O divine Spirit of love, enlighten and strengthen me to live always in your love and service to the end of my life, that so I may merit to live forever with you, and to love you for a happy eternity.

This is the change of the right hand of the Most High : precious in



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the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Oh, happy death, whenever it shall please the Lord to send you, put me in possession of true life. I will not die the death of the sinner, but will now be converted and live; I will begin to manifest my gratitude by returning to you, my God. No, I will not wait until death to repent of my sins and to love you.

Time is short, and while time is, O my soul, let us do good. O precious time, the price of eternity, how much have I wasted of your inestimable treasures! and yet lost time can never be recalled. I now regret my misspent days, and the "summer that is past." O tenderest of fathers, I will no longer resist your loving inspirations—this may be the last time these saving truths are proposed to my consideration. I now consecrate the remainder of my days to love no other but you; grant me, I beseech you, the grace of holy perseverance.

Ah, what will become of me when I shall be judged? how awful a thing to appear in judgment before an offended Saviour! how evil and bitter a thing it is to fall into the hands of an angry God! how many my sins, and yet without repentance! how grievous my crimes, and how slight my sorrow! having deserved hell, it is time to guard against the coming wrath. Ah, my Jesus, who are to be one day my judge, have pity on me before the day of justice! You died for my salvation; grant that when I shall first behold you, I may see you appeased. I thank you for the light you now shower upon my sinful soul. I love you, O infinite goodness; and because I love you, I am sorry for having offended you.

"Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," is the sentence of the reprobate. Who, O my soul, can dwell with devouring fire? yet this is the reward of your ingratitude and crimes. Go on, sinner, go on, unchaste one, give your flesh its desires; a day will come when your impurities shall be to you as pitch within your bowels, to nourish the fire which shall consume you in hell for all eternity. O my God, whom I have forsaken and forgotten, forgive me and suffer me to lose sight of you no more. Receive me once more into your favor, for I now promise to love you, and to love no other but you.

What is life but a vapor which appears for a while, and then vanishes away? such is the grandeur of this world. All must end in death, for it is decreed that all must die; and after that comes judgment. But you, O Lord, remain for ever, and your years shall not fail. How wretched have I been in forsaking you, my sovereign good, for so many years, and in going after the fleeting and deceitful vanities of the world! But from this day forth I desire to possess you as my only treasure, as the only love of my soul.

My sins are in number above the hairs of my head, and as a heavy

burthen depress me and weigh me down. Oh, when shall I have courage to shake off the yoke of my bondage, and begin to enjoy the liberty of the children of God? Do you, O Jesus, be my deliverance, and the pledge of my future felicity. You are my life and my hope, be also my eternal reward. Remember not all my iniquities, nor be mindful of my sins, but according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot them out in your precious blood.

My days have been swifter than a post. Death is hastening toward me to catch his prey, while at every breath, and every step, I am pacing on to meet him. O my God, if death were now announced to me, what would I find to have done for you? Alas! open my eyes; let me not appear before you with empty hands; a life of nothingness merits not a reward so exceedingly great; bestow on me the gift of love.

What shall I do when God shall rise to judge me? and when He shall examine me, what answer shall I have for Him, if, after so many invitations, I still resist Him? But no, O Lord, no more resistance, no more ingratitude; my past iniquities are many, but you shed your blood to wash me in a purifying bath; now help your servant whom you redeemed with your precious blood. I love you, my sweet Redeemer; have pity on me.

They shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them. Such is the utter misery of the damned that annihilation would be a blessing to them, and existence, which is the greatest of natural gifts, is to them a curse. I, too, my bountiful Creator, have abused your first gift, and have merited the same eternal woes. The trumpet of divine justice constantly thunders into the ears of those reprobates: "ever, ever,—never, never:" ever to be tortured, and never to be relieved. And I deserved to be numbered among them, but owing to your mercy, O Jesus, time is given me for repentance. Preserve me from falling into hell, and into sin, which I detest more than hell, and which alone can bring me to that place of woe. I deserved to burn forever in the fire of hell; grant that I may forever burn with the fire of your holy love.

What would it avail me if I gained the entire world, and suffered the shipwreck of my soul? what would I take in exchange for my soul? O my soul, my only soul, how often have I sold you to the devil! O my God, as I have but one soul, I am determined to save it. I am sorry for having offended you, my God: I love you, and desire to love you eternally.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Shall these consoling words be ever addressed to me, O my God, or shall I be reckoned among your blessed children forever, to reign with you forever

in glory? I hope, through the merits of my Saviour, to recover what I have lost. What shall be my joy and bliss, if I ever have the happiness to join you, happy children of God, in joys without end? O God of my soul, bind me to you with the sweet bonds of holy love forever in your heavenly kingdom.

O my Lord and Saviour, I love you above all things, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength of mind and body. And I love you for your own sake alone, for your infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, adorable Trinity, my God and my all.

And because I love you on account of your amiable perfections, it grieves me to the very core of the heart, that I have ever offended your divine Majesty. I now solemnly promise never to sin more, and to fly all the occasions of offending you; and truly to confess my sins, and faithfully perform my penance, offering my life and sorrows, my words and works, in satisfaction of them. And for the love of you, I freely pardon all my enemies, beseeching you to pardon me, through your infinite mercy, and bitter passion and death, and give me grace to amend my life and to persevere to the end. O my God, why have I at any time sinned against you, who are my Lord and my God? I am most heartily sorry for it: spare me, therefore, sweet Jesus, for your mercy's sake. Amen.

Sweetest Jesus, pierce my very soul with the tender wound of your love, that it may ever languish and be dissolved in the desire of possessing you in a happy eternity. May my soul ever thirst after you, ever seek you, and at length find you, speak only of you, and do all for your glory. May my heart be ever fixed in your heart, my hope, my riches, my peace, my refuge, my confidence, treasure, and my inheritance.

My Lord Jesus Christ, through that bitterness you suffered on the cross, when your soul was separated from your sacred body, have mercy on mine when it shall enter into eternity. Amen.

SECOND PART.

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF AN ILLUMINATIVE LIFE.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE LOVE OF JESUS.

First consideration—Jesus amiable.

THE Son of God, wishing to be loved by man, could not find out more excellent means than to become man by taking on Himself human nature, and thus uniting in Himself all that is amiable both in God and in man, and all that is most capable of captivating the heart of man, either according to nature or grace.

He is truly man, but so accomplished and perfect, that He possesses in Himself all that is good, beautiful, and excellent in man.

He is of noble origin, being descended of fourteen kings. He is the most beautiful of the children of men. He is the wisest that ever was, or will be. He is sweet, humble, generous, charitable—all that could render a man amiable.

O Jesus, how amiable you are, according to your natural perfections alone! How noble, how beautiful, how sweet, how affable, how meek!

But all these amiable and estimable natural qualities, how far inferior to those of grace! A single degree of grace adds more lustre and brilliancy than all possible beauties of nature.

A child who by baptism receives an infusion of grace becomes more precious and lovely than gold or precious stones, more brilliant than the sun, more beautiful than anything in the order of nature, in heaven or earth, among men or angels. St. Michael himself, the prince of the heavenly hosts, though of ravishing splendor, is less so, considering his natural perfections alone, than a newly baptized child in the state of grace.

O grace, how lovely you are! How rich and beautiful he is who possesses you! How hideous and miserable he is who is deprived of you! If the least grace confers such beauty, what must we say of so many graces? And what must be the beauty and loveliness of the saints, and of faithful souls, and of angels, all confirmed in grace?

What, then, shall we say of all these graces united in the same person, as is the case in Jesus, who is their centre, principle and source? Whatever graces the saints and the just possess are but a participation and emanation of the fountain of graces in Jesus, "for of his plenitude have we all received."

All graces and virtues are seated and enthroned in Jesus in their most

sublime perfection. What ravishing beauty, what enchanting riches, what inexhaustible treasures of love for His Father, and of charity for men! What stores of humility, of patience, of obedience, of sweetness and meekness!

One alone of these graces, one alone of these virtues, in an inferior degree, would be sufficient to render a person amiable; and if he becomes more amiable, in proportion as he possesses more graces and virtues, ah, how exceedingly amiable and lovely must Jesus be, the fountain of all graces in their utmost excellence!

A little patience makes a person very amiable; a little meekness makes another very amiable; the infinite patience of Jesus, His infinite humility, His infinite charity—do they not make Him infinitely amiable? Ah, Jesus, how amiable you are in glory! For as grace surpasses nature, so glory far surpasses grace. The least of the saints in glory is more beautiful, more amiable and admirable than the greatest of saints in the state of grace.

Oh, grace, how beautiful you are! Oh, glory, how much more so! how exceedingly so! And if a single degree of glory exalts a person to such admirable beauty, what must be the beauty and superexcellence of the great saints, of the angels, of the ever Virgin; and how sublime, how transcendent, how prodigious the eternal beauty of the author of all grace and glory!

O Jesus, how beautiful you are! how brilliant you are! how admirable and lovely you are! And if all sorts of beauty be amiable, and capable of commanding love, and if the greater the beauty the more amiable it is, how amiable must all the beauties of Jesus be! What force, what sweet violence must they not possess to draw us to His love? and what is there, either within us, or without us, that should withdraw us from loving Him? Than Jesus what can we find more beautiful and lovely?

But the Divinity is superior to all these created beauties of nature, of grace, and of glory. The Divinity is an incomprehensible ocean of every perfection. It is an eternity before and after all time; it is an immensity, beyond all space; infinitely surpassing all greatness; infinite beauty; infinite light; infinite perfection; infinitely great. Jesus possesses all these infinite perfections; in Him, says St. Paul, dwells all the plenitude of the Divinity.

His goodness, His wisdom, His power, His beauty, His sanctity, are all divine. He is as amiable as He is good—wise, powerful, beautiful, and holy; and as He is infinitely good, infinitely beautiful, so He is infinitely amiable.

Oh Jesus, how amiable you are, above all loveliness! Lovely by all the gifts and endowments of nature; lovely by all the perfections of

heavenly grace ; lovely by all the superexcellencies of glory ; lovely, and infinitely amiable by all the infinite greatness of the Divinity ! But more than amiable by all those created and uncreated perfections which are found united in your divine person, whereby they become ennobled, deified, and are raised to an infinite excellence, merit, and grandeur.

Ah, Man-God ! Ah, God-Man ! Ah, wisdom incarnate ! O Light of my soul ! O Love of my heart ! O Jesus, how amiable you are ! how lovely you are !

Second Consideration—Jesus loving.

Jesus is not only amiable and lovely, but He is loving too. All His wonderful perfections do not make Him haughty or disdainful, as is generally the case with men, who are easily prone to despise others not possessed with the same advantages as themselves.

Jesus, no doubt, is infinitely lovely, but His love for us is equally infinite, and the more He loves us, the more is He lovely ; and so lovely is He, that without all these amiable perfections of nature, grace, glory, and union with the Deity, He would still be amiable on account of His love for us, because love deserves a return of love.

Ah, what a furnace of love in the heart of Jesus ! He has loved man from all eternity. Having suffered the sentence of condemnation to be put into execution against the rebellious angels, He offered himself a victim to the justice of His Father, for the sins of man.

He loves us in his incarnation, wherein He humbles Himself infinitely, substantially and eternally ; infinitely by uniting the sublimity of the Deity to human flesh, the very dregs of the creation ; substantially, by uniting His divine substance to ours ; eternally, by never leaving human nature, which He has assumed. Forever shall He be a God-Man and a Man-God.

What has reduced Him to this state of infinite and eternal humiliation ? Nothing else but His infinite and eternal love for us. Infinite humiliation, the result of His infinite love for us. Eternal humiliation, the result of His eternal love for us. Ah, how much Jesus loves us ! Ah, how much we are loved by Jesus !

He loves us in His nativity ; for what made Him become a child ? What induced Him to embrace poverty ? to be born in a stable, in a manger, in cold and privation, on a little hay ? What else but His excessive love for us ?

He loves us in His circumcision, so as to suffer the most painful and excruciating operation in His tender and delicate virginal flesh, as if He were a sinner. Ah, what confusion, what pain, what love ! How precious every drop of His most sacred blood !

He loves during His whole life. What has subjected Him to such

frightful privations—to be badly lodged, badly clad, badly fed, and to live as a poor tradesman? O prodigious love of Jesus for men, it is you that make Him do and suffer so much!

How wonderful the beginning and the end of the life of Jesus! He is born in a village, and he dies in the capital of a kingdom; He is born in a manger, and dies on a cross; He is born among beasts, and expires between two robbers; He spends his life in a poor workshop, to earn His bread by the work of His hands and the sweat of His brow.

Whence these extremities in the life of Jesus, so contrary to what was His due, yet so capable of convincing us of His excess of love for us? They are so many proofs of His infinite charity that never has recoiled from doing or suffering anything for our utility.

He loves in His passion, which, however painful, is still more a passion of love than of suffering. Here let us pause a while, to consider how He shows us in His passion that He loves us truly.

First. The more exalted the person is who suffers, the greater He shows His love to be for the person for whom He suffers.

Second. The more abject and vile the person is for whom He suffers, the more He manifests the excellence of His love. A person so noble to suffer for so mean and despicable a creature! what excess of love!

Third. The more painful and ignominious the suffering, the stronger must be the love that endures it; but when there is question of suffering death, and that the most cruel and ignominious, what must be the love to undergo it!

Fourth. When, in all that is suffered, nothing is sought for but the interest of the person beloved, who can be of no benefit to the person who suffers, and is utterly incapable of increasing or diminishing his happiness, what a manifestation of love!

Fifth. When He suffers without constraint or necessity, but through pure benevolence and love.

Sixth. When He suffers, not for any offence of His own, but for those of His beloved; and, what is more, when the crime is to have offended Himself; so that, instead of punishing the culprit, He, through excess of love, pardons him, and takes the punishment on Himself.

Seventh. When He suffers, not only for the other, but by the other, and that most willingly, in order to exempt him from the punishment of the offence he has committed against Himself. What is this? we are lost in amazement. What love!

Eighth. When, being able to make satisfaction for the injuries at very little expense, without much trouble and pain, yet through love He gives Himself up to the greatest ignominy and most excruciating tortures.

Ninth. If through love He even anticipates these tortures, procures

them in advance and before the time, and augments them when procured.

Tenth. When, however great His sufferings, the excess of His love makes Him find them trifling, and He is willing to suffer much more for His beloved.

Eleventh. When by His sufferings He relieves the other from the greatest evils that could befall him.

Twelfth. When He not only delivers him from the greatest evils, but also procures him the greatest blessings he is capable of receiving.

Thirteenth. When He requires nothing else from the person for whom and by whom He suffers so much but a return of love, with which He is quite content and highly pleased.

Fourteenth. When, after all, He is still ready to pardon him as often as he slights, offends and outrages Him ; ready to forget all the past, and to load him with favors, if he will but love Him.

What love this ! how prodigious, how excessive ! Where find such love ? where but in the heart of Jesus, in that heart so inflamed with love for man ?

First. Who is He who suffers ? A divine person, the second person of the most holy Trinity a person of infinite perfections.

Second. For whom does He suffer ? for a most vile, abject and worthless creature, having of himself but two nothings—that of nature, which renders him unworthy of any good ; and that of grace, which renders him worthy of all evil.

Third. What does He suffer ? The loss of all that one could lose, while all sorts of evil befall Him—the loss of property, of reputation, and of life itself ; Jesus had but one poor garment, this was torn from His sacred body : His reputation is blasted, He is found guilty as a criminal, and He forfeits His life on an infamous cross, after suffering the most humiliating and painful tortures that man had ever suffered.

Fourth. For whose sake does He suffer ? Is it for His own sake or for ours ? Surely for ours ; heaven was His rightful inheritance, and though we were all damned, His happiness would not have suffered the least diminution, more than by the loss of the wicked angels. It is not in our power either to add to, or take from, His essential and infinite felicity.

Fifth. He suffers from no sort of necessity or constraint. For who could have forced Him to it ? Could man ? With one word He laid prostrate on their backs those who came to seize Him. Could His good angels ? They are His true and faithful servants, and the ministers of His commands. Could the devils ? them He chases and puts to flight by a single word. Would it be His eternal Father ? Him He had but to ask and He would have sent legions of angels to His defence. What,



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then, forces Him to suffer? His love: His love for us makes Him, of His own free will, and without constraint, submit to such painful sufferings.

Sixth. What crime on His part to subject Him to sufferings? None, whatever; and there could be none, being impeccable and infinitely holy. All the fault is on our own part; and it is on our account alone that He suffers.

Seventh. Not only does He suffer for our sins, but for sins leveled against Himself, the punishment of which He takes on Himself with admirable bounty and love.

Eighth. Besides suffering for us, He, moreover, suffers by us; He is offended by us, and He is punished for us and by us, and this He suffers most willingly.

Ninth. Having it in His power to make sufficient satisfaction for us by a single sigh, by a word, by the slightest suffering, He gives Himself up, through love for us, to all sorts of ignominy, affronts and torments.

Tenth. He does more; such is His love for us, that He anticipates His sufferings, advances them before the time, and increases them, to suffer the more and the sooner for us.

Eleventh. However great His sufferings, He looks on them as trifling, and is ready to suffer still more greatly—to such a degree that whatever torments could be inflicted on Him, and however long, they never could equal the extent of His love.

Twelfth. From what evils does He deliver us by His sufferings? From the greatest, the most horrible, and evils of the longest duration, that could befall any rational creature; from the infamy of sin, the wrath of God, the fire of hell, the tyranny of the devils, and the loss of God forever. These accursed spirits know but too well the extent of the evils, from the never-ending tortures in which they are enveloped; we would have to suffer the same, were it not for the love and satisfaction of Christ.

Thirteenth. But besides exempting us from all those by His own sufferings, He, moreover, procures us inestimable blessings: His grace and protection, the assistance of His angels, the peace of a good conscience, and the means of practising virtue in this life; and in the other, a happiness which the eye is not capable of seeing, nor the ear of hearing, nor the mind of conceiving; the possession of God Himself, and in Him the possession of all things for all eternity. If the procuring the good of another be the best proof of one's love for Him, what must be the love of Jesus for us in procuring us such inconceivable blessings? O infinite love of Jesus for me! what should be my love for Him?

Fourteenth. For this admirable love for us, for His sufferings for the love of us, for averting so many evils, for procuring us so many bless-

ings, what does He require of us? Ah! what has He not a right to require of us? And what are we not obliged to grant Him, were it to suffer all the tortures imaginable? But this He does not require. What then? only to love Him; and with this He is satisfied, and considers His love and sufferings sufficiently requited. O admirable love of Jesus for man! Make me love you. It is enough.

Fifteenth. If, after all, we should be so ungrateful as to offend Him, and even repeatedly, He is still ready to pardon us, to forget the past and to load us with new favors, if we but love Him and sincerely repent.

Besides foreseeing that after His resurrection He should go to heaven, whither His Father called Him, and should leave this world and man, what does He do to satisfy His love for us? Oh, mystery of love! Oh, wonderful invention! He institutes the adorable sacrament of our altars, and by this means He dwells till the end of time with us on earth, while He goes to take possession of His inheritance in heaven.

What excess of love! How many miracles wrought in our favor! He is in body both in heaven and on earth; and on earth in as many places as there are Hosts; and these miracles are renewed as often as these Hosts are consecrated. And by another prodigy He renders Himself invisible, though consisting of flesh and blood like us. Again, He compresses Himself, whole and entire, in each Host, and whole and entire in each of its parts. He changes the bread into His sacred body, and the wine into His precious blood. He maintains the accidents of these elements without their substance, and works a number of other miracles at the voice of the priest, though he were the most wicked of men.

To call to His assistance so many prodigies for the sake of remaining with man—to dwell in so poor a habitation; to suffer Himself to be confined in tabernacles and ciboriums so miserable and unsuitable to His dignity; to remain there, deprived of the use of His powers and faculties, a captive for the love of us, exposed to all the injuries He suffers from heretics, from sorcerers, from sinners, and from the greater part of lukewarm Christians—what a prodigy of love! O Jesus, how sincerely you loved us!

To have a still clearer idea of how dearly Jesus loved us, let us weigh well this astonishing, but admirable truth: that of all those who put Jesus to torture, not one inflicted more on Him than He did Himself. Yes, it was Jesus that added strength to His executioners; it was Jesus that sharpened the nails that pierced His sacred body, and the thorns that scalped His holy head; and as He contributed to our happiness with all creatures, so He co-operated with them all, that were instruments of His tortures, to add to His sufferings.

Moreover, He abandons Himself to interior anguish incomparably greater than all His other exterior pains ; to deadly sadness, to frightful agony, to a languishing sweat of water and blood, and to overwhelming dereliction of soul ; so that it is true to say that none have been so cruel to Jesus, as He Himself.

But why so much rigor ? It is for love of us. The severity He exercises toward Himself is but the effect of His love for us. Oh, rigor ! Oh, love ! Oh, rigor of Jesus to Himself ! Oh, love of Jesus for us ! How St. Gregory of Nyssa had reason to say that love is a mild tyrant ; mild toward the person loved, but a tyrant to him who loves. The love of Jesus has been mild toward us, but tyrannical and cruel to Himself. O what love !

Let us develop still more this admirable truth. Jesus has been so mild toward us, and so harsh to Himself ; and His harshness to Himself was owing to His tenderness and affection for us.

Jesus so great, and we so insignificant !

Jesus so perfect, and we so imperfect !

Jesus so holy, and we so wicked !

Jesus so amiable, and we so hateful !

And Jesus so great, so perfect, so holy, so amiable, what reason had not He to love Himself ! And we so miserable, so imperfect, so wicked, so odious, what reason had not He to hate us !

Notwithstanding, He loves us more than Himself ; He is unmindful of Himself in order to attend to us ; He immolates Himself for us ; He sacrifices Himself for us, both on the cross by the hands of His executioners, and in the garden by His interior agony ; even on the eve of His passion, instituting the blessed sacrament, according to the opinion of St. Gregory of Nyssa, Jesus gave Himself a mystic death, being priest and victim ; priest immolating, and victim immolated ; reducing Himself in this mystery to a state of death, which then began and will continue to the end of ages. Oh, death ! Oh, love ! O Jesus, dead for love of us !

Let us endeavor to penetrate still deeper into the loving heart of Jesus. We are all addicted to self-love ; well, then, Jesus loves us more than we can love ourselves. He has given sufficient proof of this, since He has done and suffered more for us than we could do or suffer for ourselves.

Jesus has deprived Himself of the manifestation and all the badges of His glory for love of us ; and we are scarce willing to deprive ourselves of the least satisfaction for the good of our souls.

Jesus has fasted for us forty days and forty nights, without eating or drinking ; and we are unwilling to practise a little abstinence and privation for our own good.

Jesus spent whole nights in prayer for us ; and we find it irksome to spend a few hours in prayer for ourselves.

Jesus lived and died in poverty for us ; and we will not suffer the least want ; the good of our souls.

Jesus vouchsafed to be torn with stripes for our salvation, and we will not undergo the least penance to save our souls.

Jesus willingly submitted to all sorts of affliction, even to die for us, and to die on a gibbet, and we will suffer nothing for ourselves. Does not that prove to us that, however we may love ourselves, Jesus loves us still more ?

Ah, how full we are of self-love ! and yet the love of Jesus for us is superabundant. And if it be the anguish of sufferings that makes us avoid them, they are far more sensibly felt by Jesus.

Oh, love ! Oh, love of Jesus for man ! far exceeding man's love for himself. And to crown His tenderness for us, whatever may be our obligations to do penance, He never requires that our sufferings should equal His. No ; He does not require of us to be crowned with thorns, nor to be nailed to a cross ; He is satisfied if we do some slight penance, and when we do it He has even compassion on us. He vouchsafes to bestow on us a share in His glory, if we but take a part in His sufferings.

O Jesus, how much you love us ! yes, I will repeat it again, and a hundred and a thousand times over, O Jesus, how dearly you love us ! You give a proof of it every day, by the many favors of nature and grace you constantly bestow on us. O good Jesus, how much you love us ! Alas, you bear with our ingratitude, and you render good for evil.

O Jesus ! how opposite and very different our dispositions ! you load us with benefits, and we repay you by our offences. O Jesus, Jesus ! he who says Jesus, says all that is great and perfect ; all that is good, and sweet, and tender, and clement !

Third Consideration—Jesus loved.

Jesus, being so amiable in Himself, and having such excessive love for us, deserves well to be loved. But has He been loved ? and is He still loved ? No doubt He is loved by His Father, and beyond measure, in whom He is well pleased. Ah, what infinite love of His eternal Father for Jesus ! and what a return of love on the part of Jesus for His eternal Father !

He is loved by the Holy Ghost, who is all love for Jesus, and diffuses it into the hearts of those who give themselves up to His divine influence. Oh, love of Love itself for Jesus ! oh, love of Jesus for Love itself ! oh, personal love ! substantial love ! infinite love !

He is loved by His blessed Mother. Oh, love of Mary for Jesus !

there is more love in the heart alone of Mary for Jesus, than in all the hearts of men and angels. Oh, heart of Mary, all fire, all flame, all love for Jesus!

He is loved by the angels, by the saints, by all that is in heaven. Heaven itself is all love for Jesus; pure love, profound love, eternal love, ineffable love.

He is loved by the souls in purgatory, who are incomparably more inflamed with the love of Jesus, and with the desire of beholding Him, than with the fire that purifies them.

He is loved by the just here on earth, who would be better pleased to lose everything else than the love of Jesus.

As the love of Jesus for man made Him suffer so much for him, what does not the love of men for Jesus make them suffer for His sake? Such as to lacerate their bodies with stripes; to wear, day and night, haircloth and sackcloth; to fast rigorously whole months and years; to spend their lives in prayer; to cross the seas; to expose themselves a thousand times to death; to suffer imprisonment; to endure chains, and the funeral pile itself, in order to manifest to the world their love for Jesus, and their ardent desire that He should be known and loved by all.

O Jesus, truly loved by all good hearts, and who are good only because they love Jesus; and who are so much the better the more they love Jesus!

But let us now come to ourselves. In good earnest, has Jesus been loved by us in time past? Is He loved by us at present? In a word, have we loved Him? Do we love Him? Let us see.

Is it loving Jesus to offend Him constantly? Is it loving Him to do and say what displeases Him, and not to do and say what is acceptable to Him? Is it loving Him to think more of others than of Him? Is it loving Him to be more attached to everything else, and to pay more attention to them, than to what regards His service?

Is it loving Him to return evil for good? to abuse His gifts, and to turn them against Himself; to get tired of His company, and to be more pleased with the world than with Him? Is it not so we have treated Him up to the present time? Yes, truly, and how shameful it is for us!

Jesus is so lovely! Jesus bears so much love for me! I should love Him infinitely more than He loves me, because He is infinitely more worthy of love than I am. But that I cannot, because I am not capable of infinite love; but I should, at least, love Him to the best of my power. And though I were to love Him so, alas, it would still be very little. And yet I have not loved Him as much as I could; I have not loved Him with all my heart. I have divided it between Him and creatures.

Though we should have loved Him, and should still love Him, more

than all creatures, it would still be very little; for what are all creatures in comparison to Jesus? It is, then, loving Him little to say to Him, "I love you more than my friends, more than myself, more than all creatures," since they are all a mere nothing in comparison to Jesus.

Ah, my heart, miserable heart, what have you loved, and what have you not loved? You have loved?—what? What my tongue would not dare to utter, and what I would be ashamed to think of; and you have not loved Jesus. All the hatred you can conceive for yourself will never be enough for having loved so many vile and contemptible things, and not to have loved Jesus. What do I say? not to have loved Him? Nay, to have so much offended Him, to have committed so many outrages against Him; and to have abused His favors, and turned them against Himself.

Ah, Jesus so lovely! Jesus so loving! Jesus so little loved! Amiable above all things else, yet less loved than the most trifling things.

Jesus, who loves me so much! who has loved me more than Himself; more than His precious blood that He has shed for me; more than His very life that He has sacrificed for me! And I have less loved Him than an imaginary punctilio of honor, and the slightest gratification of the senses. Ah, what blindness! what illusion! what infatuation!

Jesus, the best of friends! no other loves us as He does. Jesus, the most potent friend! no other can assist us as He. Jesus, the most sincere of friends, who seeks not His own interest, but ours. Jesus, the most liberal of friends, who strips Himself of all to enrich us. Jesus, the most faithful of friends, who never abandons such as love Him.

And yet Jesus, who is so perfect a friend, has so few friends—He is so little loved. On the contrary, He is so badly treated, so much offended, even by those who ought to die for love of Him. I myself am of that number, who was so much loved by Him, so much cherished by Him, so much favored by Him. Ah, what a shame it is for me! what a subject of confusion for me while I live!

Here indulge in sentiments of astonishment, confusion, silence, and regret.

Ah, Jesus, how could you have loved such a wretch as I am? How could I have so little loved you who are so amiable? But how could I have brought myself to offend you? Alas! what cause had you given me? And how is it, after all this bad treatment, that you stretch out your arms to embrace me, and that you throw open your heart to receive me?

Ah, I throw myself into your merciful arms, O good Jesus; I plunge into your charitable heart. Yes, I cast myself at your feet, like your ardent lover, Magdalen, and cry out with all the sorrow and compunction

of a contrite and humble heart, "Pardon me, good Jesus, pardon me all the past. Now and forever shall I love you; yes, I will love you with my whole heart."

O amiable Jesus! O loving Jesus! O beloved Jesus! I love you, and desire to love you with all my strength. But since all I can do is very little, I desire to love you with all the love of the just on earth; with all the love of the souls in purgatory; with all the love of the blessed in heaven; with all the ecstatic love of the angels; with all the inflamed love of your divine Mother; with all the love you bear yourself; with all the love your eternal Father and the Holy-Ghost have for you.

Thus, as much as you are lovely and loving, so much shall you be loved. O Jesus, infinitely lovely! O Jesus, infinitely loving! O Jesus, infinitely loved! O love! O Jesus! O Jesus! O love!

Other Considerations capable of exciting and fostering within us the love of Jesus Christ.

I. Jesus ought rather to despise and reject our love, when offered Him, than to seek it with so much pains; and we ought to seek the love of Jesus with every care and pain, since it is so advantageous to us. But no; Jesus so ardently desires to be loved by us, that He puts up with all these disadvantages, provided we but love Him.

And what signifies our love? and what are we? Feeble creatures, worms of the earth, so many nothings. And yet Jesus, whose majesty is infinite, and whose felicity is complete, considers all these disadvantages well compensated by our loving Him; and if we love Him He will enrich us with the good things of eternity.

And shall we not love Him? Are we fools? Are we dreaming broad awake? Are we infatuated? Are we bewitched? If a poor person were told that he had but to love some rich man, and that he would bestow on him immense wealth, would it be wise of him, instead of loving him, to act toward him with haughtiness and disdain?

If a patient were told to love his physician, and that he would restore him to his health, would he fail to love him? or, if he did, what would be said of him?

If a culprit were told that he had but to love his judge, and that he would keep him from being thrown into prison, or from being put to death, would he be wanting in loving him? or, if he were, what would be thought of him?

All this is applicable to ourselves. We were poor, and are still so of ourselves, and devoid of all sorts of goods; Jesus will bestow on us the greatest riches if we love Him; He even became poor to enrich us; will we, then, fail to love Him? and if we do, are we wise?

We were sick, and are still so; our infirmities are our sins. Jesus is

come to deliver us from them, and to pardon us ; to cure all our infirmities, and to heal all our diseases, provided we love Him ; He even takes on Him our sins, and atones for them, and will we still not love Him ? If we do not, what will become of us ?

We are malefactors, and guilty of treason against God ; we deserved to be cast into the prison of hell, and to suffer there eternal torments : Jesus has come to preserve us from it, provided we love Him ; and in order to deliver us, He suffered Himself to be tied, to be buffeted, to be torn with stripes, and to be put to death ; and, after all, will we not love Him ?

If we do not, do we not deserve, not one hell, but a thousand hells, and a thousand eternities of woe, one after the other, if it could be, to punish us for our ingratitude ? And when we shall have been consigned to eternal fire and eternal torments, will we not enter into an implacable rage and fury against ourselves, and the insensibility of our own hearts, for being deprived of such great benefits, and cast into the most awful tortures for not having loved Jesus ? This surpasses any ideas we can form to ourselves in this world.

II. Though we did not love Jesus, what loss would He sustain by it ? and though we did love Him, what benefit would result to Him from it ? we can neither increase nor diminish His happiness ; in Himself He is infinitely happy and above our power, which is so limited, or which is, rather, weakness and impotency ; yet Jesus does us the honor to seek our friendship, by means so full of anguish and so painful that no martyr ever suffered so much as He did, and will we not love Him ? Ought we not to die of confusion at our own folly, or melt with love for Jesus ?

O my good Jesus, how true all that is ! What a just subject of confusion to me for the past ! But what a just subject of acknowledgment, of love and tenderness for you for the future ! No, no, dear Jesus, your travails shall not be rendered useless ; your blood shall not have been spilt in vain ; nor your sufferings borne without fruit. What you sought with so much earnestness, what cost you so much pains, you shall have, and without further delay ; from this moment all my love, all my heart, all myself is yours. Nevermore shall I belong to myself or to any other creature. All to you, all in you, all for you.

III. If we give away our love from Jesus to any other creature, what will we find in heaven or on earth equal to Jesus ? In heaven, what ? The angels and the saints. What renders them amiable is their love for Jesus. Without their love for Jesus they would become demons.

On earth, what shall we find ? Human bodies with a fair skin, it may be, but covering a contemptible flesh, hideous to behold or imagine ; delicate viands and exquisite wines ; vast possessions ; valuable furniture :

gold and silver vases ; lucrative situations, that may raise us to vain and fleeting greatness ; but, in earnest, are those objects on which we ought to bestow our affections, to the prejudice of the love we owe to Jesus ?

Verily, what are we doing ? Do we think seriously of what we are giving away ?—our love, our affection. Or on what we are throwing it away ? on sinful creatures. Do we consider what it is we so often refuse ?—our love and affection. And to whom we refuse it ? to Jesus. Let us, then, immediately say, more from our hearts than from our lips, “ All that is not Jesus shall no longer be the object of my love. Nothing but Jesus : no more love but for Jesus.”

IV. When we give our affection to any other but to Jesus, what happens to us ? what a melancholy reverse ! By loving Jesus, we have every advantage in this life and in the life to come ; whereas, without His love, we are threatened with every calamity, both here and hereafter.

But, not loving Him, we deprive ourselves of the spiritual gift of grace and of glory, of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, of the protection of the angels, of the right to heaven.

We become a prey of ambition, of anger, of envy, of gluttony, of impurity, of avarice, of idleness, of sloth, of hatred ; slaves of our passions, fools, vicious and miserable ; the horror of Christ, the aversion of His angels, the scorn of nature, the pest of the world, the sport of demons, and the fuel of hell.

Thus we deprive ourselves of all sorts of benefits, and we are overwhelmed with all sorts of evils. Oh, what treasures in the love of Jesus ! What losses sustained in not loving Jesus ! To love Jesus is to have all and to possess all ; and not to love Jesus is to lose all ; since, without the love of Jesus, there remains nothing but sin, and the punishment that follows sin.

V. I now begin to perceive that the hell of hells for the damned is to have had no love for Jesus ; for Jesus so lovely, so loving, so beneficent. Oh, these miserable souls feel the loss of the love of Jesus and clearly perceive, but too late, that everything except the love of Jesus is frail, and poor, and miserable. O love, so little cultivated, so little practised on earth, how you are esteemed, how you are regretted, how you are wished for in hell !

Ah, how often have I been without you ! and, consequently, how often have I been miserable ! Too often, alas, too often ! No more shall it happen ; no more shall the like misfortune befall me. Rather lose all things else, than the love of Jesus. Ah, let us love Him, and love Him with all our might in this life, that we may love Him for all eternity.

VI. What could be capable of preventing and dissuading us from loving Jesus ? There could be but one thing—because, perhaps, He requires

too much of us. But the answer to this is easy, and indisputable, and calculated to inspire us with more and more courage to love Him.

First of all, what He requires of us is very just, very honorable and easy : it is to love an object the most amiable. Second, He gives us grace to accomplish what He requires of us. And, third, the benefits derived to us from His love are so great and admirable that they surpass our comprehension.

And whether these benefits consist in an exemption from great evils, or in the acquirement of great riches ; though we had to deprive ourselves of all the pleasures, and undergo all the miseries of this life, we should gladly submit, for the love of Jesus, as thousands of martyrs and holy penitents, of every condition, sex and age, have done. His love is truly the pearl of the gospel, for the acquisition of which we must sell, give away, and abandon all.

VII. Should Jesus address us as follows, what would we say ? “ If you would love me in this life and in the other, and be loved by me forever in heaven, you must pass through all I suffered ; you must give up all for the love of me, and do and suffer all that I have done and suffered for the love of you. You must suffer poverty, fatigue, heat, cold, hunger, thirst, fasting, reproaches, blows, stripes, thorns, nails, and the very cross, otherwise you shall possess no love for me, nor will I have any love for you, and without my love you will be reprobates, objects of my eternal hatred, and forever miserable, and against you I shall eternally satisfy my justice.

“ Why should not you, miserable worms of the earth, and criminals as you are, why should not you suffer for the love of me, and for your own salvation, what I, who am your God, and innocence itself, have suffered for love of you ? I have decreed it, and my decree shall stand inviolable, that no one shall be the companion of my glory who has not been the companion of my sufferings. You deserved to have suffered much more, since you merited hell : and if, in the green wood, such sufferings happen, what will become of the dry and sterile wood, that is only fit to be cast into the fire and burned ? This is what you are, and what you merit.”

If such were His words to us, what would we answer ? Would not each of us say, “ Well, my dearest Jesus, of two evils I will choose the least. The greatest evil that could befall me would be not to be loved by you and not to love you, since it is the source of all other evils. I choose, then, O my beloved Jesus, and with all my heart, to embrace all your sufferings ; to live in poverty, toil, misery, and pain, even to death. I would rather die with suffering some short time for love of you, than be exempt from some short, slight pain, and, deprived of your love, be condemned to suffer eternally in hell.”

Is not that the answer we should make Him? And to answer otherwise, and to make another choice, we should have lost our senses, and soon have to repent. But our repentance would be fruitless and without end, like that of the rest of the damned, whose number we would increase, and whose tortures we would experience, for having imitated them in so bad a choice.

But no, Jesus does not require so much from us; and now, with His permission, I will take the liberty to ask Him what is His divine will in that regard, for my own instruction and His greater glory.

“Do you require, O sweetest Jesus, that, like you, we should fast forty days and forty nights, without eating or drinking?” “No, my dear children,” He replies, “I have reserved this great fast for myself; but never eat or drink to excess; keep the fasts that are ordained, and observe some thorough devotion; in your meals retrench some little things; abstain from some delicate morsel or some favorite drink for love of me.”

“Good Jesus, would you have us scourged like you?” “No, my dear children; I did require it of some of my servants, and they were willing to endure it, and saw with joy their blood flow for love of me; but I do not require the same of you. All I ask of you is, to avoid those dainties, effeminacies, and luxuries, those scandalous nudities, that offend me, that wound modest eyes, and prove an occasion of sin to your neighbor.”

“Will you have our hands and feet pierced with nails, like yours?” “No, my beloved children, no; those I reserve for my own hands and feet: but no longer make use of your feet to frequent dangerous company, to walk in the ways of iniquity, and to fall into the occasions of sin. But employ them in visiting churches, hospitals, and prisons; assisting the poor, and comforting the afflicted; in discharging the duties of your state of life. Employ not your hands in the working of evil, in taking more meat and drink than is necessary, in overcharging for goods or labor, in striking others, in writing what may be offensive to me, or injurious to your neighbor; but use them in the pursuits of your lawful vocation, in paying your debts, in giving alms, in writing something good and edifying, in doing penance, in correcting such as are under your care, when they fail in their duty.”

“Would you have us crucified and loaded with ignominy, and agonizing, like you?” “No, my children; I have taken up the cross for love of you; I have carried it on my lacerated shoulders, and I am well pleased to die nailed to it; but do you abuse not your body, nor your senses, in seeing, hearing, saying or doing what is offensive to me, but employ them in listening to what edifies, in looking at objects that inspire devotion and charity, in holding pious conversation, in giving good example, in doing good works, in suffering patiently little trials, such as disgraces, con-

fusion, sickness, poverty, disappointments, ill-humor, fatigue, or other annoyances, that have already befallen you, or may hereafter happen to you."

If, notwithstanding, we fail in avoiding what He forbids, and in practising what He commands, though otherwise so easy in comparison of all He has done and suffered for love of us, if we fail, in the very face of the great rewards He promises, and of the great evils He threatens us with, what shall we, one day, have to say? what shall we think of ourselves? what shall become of us?


What, therefore, should we do? Should we not, from this moment, make a prompt and perfect oblation of ourselves to the influence of His divine love; to give up all, to do all, to suffer all that He requires of us?

And what signifies all that? It is so little that it is a mere nothing. But Jesus! But His love! But His riches! But His grandeurs! But His glories, and the delights of paradise! Ah, how truly great is all that! How truly happy are we, then, that He should vouchsafe to accept such little things, and to be satisfied with them, and to give us in exchange things so great; His love, His graces, His glory, all the immense riches that are locked up in Him—His own self. Ah, Jesus, my Jesus, I am yours: I am entirely yours; I am wholly yours.

THIRD PART.

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF A UNITIVE LIFE.

The use of these Exercises.

S the truths proposed in the following contemplations are the principles of the unitive life, and as they contain, under so many heads, several other saving truths, they should be thoroughly dwelt upon in the light of faith, in the form of contemplation, and with a simple and steady eye; much in the same way as, in opening a window, we take a view of near and distant objects alike, without the labor of reasoning or discoursing.

Two extremes are equally to be avoided in these holy exercises—indifference and curiosity. By indifference they will be passed over lightly, without being allowed to make an impression on the heart, or to be rightly understood. And curiosity will hurry over them with precipitation, and impatience pass from one subject to another.

In order to obviate this evil, they should be dwelt upon with serious attention, and with a mind deeply impressed with their importance, and a heart filled with holy affection; without being anxious to proceed, or go further, until the affection abates, and it is time to pass on.

This sort of prayer requires nearly the same dispositions as to go to sleep. In order to sleep, we must keep as motionless and tranquil as possible, without fixing our thoughts on anything. Thus, such as would be attentive and fervent in prayer, and have the divine Spirit to operate in their souls, should endeavor to keep themselves in a state of perfect composure of mind and body, and not allow any idea to obtrude itself, or any affection to disturb the operations of divine grace.

It is not easy to describe the incalculable advantages arising from this guard of the heart and senses, and this composure of the whole interior in the presence of God. It is a supernatural state, as is also the sort of prayer that is its object. In itself it is even an excellent sort of prayer, and is easily acquired by that quietude of spirit so much recommended by the fathers of a spiritual life; and should it have no other good effect than to teach us to govern our passions, it would be always a great virtue and blessing. The whole secret of prayer is attention of mind and affection of heart.

Considerations on the love of God.

I. God is exceedingly good: yes, surely, He is good, and infinitely good. His goodness knows no limits of endurance, but is infinite, immutable, and eternal.

Does not such unbounded goodness deserve to be loved by you, oh, my soul, and to be infinitely loved? Ah, that we could love God as He deserves to be loved! but such is not the lot of man upon earth; here below we can only have the desire of it.

Well then, my God, I desire; I would most willingly love you as much as your infinite goodness deserves to be loved.

II. God loves me. In verity and truth God loves me. What an honor and consolation to me!

His love even for me is so great and perfect that it is equal to Himself, that is, it is infinite and eternal: for in God there is no inequality, no mutability, no change: all that is in God is God, that is, great, immense, infinite, immutable, eternal, like Himself.

With what infinite and immense love does God love! Ah, the greatness of God's love for me! What return of love should I not make Him! and although my love for Him cannot be infinite, should at least love Him without reserve.

My love cannot arrive at that degree of intensity and perfection; my poor heart is incapable of it. God alone can love Himself with infinite love. Love yourself, therefore, O my God, with love divine: do love yourself as you deserve to be loved, and my heart shall ever rejoice that you love yourself so, and I shall never cease to honor and glorify the infinite love you bear yourself.

But, not to prove ungrateful, I desire to return you love for love, as far as I am able: your love for me is unbounded, while mine is very limited and confined. You love me with your whole self, and I wish to love you with my whole heart and soul; this is all I can do; it is all you require; for he who gives all he has can do no more, and with it you are satisfied; therefore I make an oblation of my whole being to you, O my God, in return for your giving yourself entirely to me.

III. God wishes me to love Him; most assuredly He requires it and commands it, for love should be reciprocal; love demands a return of love, such is the will of God in my regard, and is it not a great honor to me? and should I not yield to Him?

Yet how often has He solicited me, and with what benignity! and how often have I refused Him, and with what ingratitude! Now, O my God, I beseech you to accept what you have so long demanded, my heart, my will, my affection. Ask no longer what belongs to you by a thousand titles; possess, inflame, and transform evermore my heart into love for you.

IV. God offers me his grace to love Him; yes, surely, and He also requires that I should love Him; for without His grace I could not love Him with a love of charity as He requires. Well, then, He offers me His

grace to love Him: why should I not accept it? I do accept it with all my heart. And having accepted it, and being enabled thereby to love Him, why should I not love Him with my whole soul?

O my God, I accept your divine grace, such as you offer it to me, and I will endeavor most cordially to make good use of it to love you. Yes, my God, I will love you according to the measure of your grace and my own strength.

V. God applies Himself more to me alone, to draw me to His love, than He does to the government of the whole universe. And when He offers me grace to love Him, He bestows on me a more precious boon, and a gift far more beautiful than the stars, the sun, or the angels themselves in their pure nature.

And when, with the help of His graces, I make an act of the love of God, I perform an act the most glorious and advantageous in the world.

Why, then, should I not love my God? Evermore will I revel in His sweet love. Yes, my God, as grace is never wanting on your part, so with love on mine; a never-ending flow of grace from you, and an incessant return of love from me.

VI. O my soul, of what dost thou think when thou thinkest not of God?

Alas! thou thinkest only of thyself, of creatures, of a thousand trifling, superfluous things.

Thou thinkest more of the world than of God, and yet is there anything in this world which should occupy thee as much as God?

O my soul, what dost thou love when thou lovest not God? Is there anything else which is not infinitely beneath God, less beautiful, less amiable, than God?

And still thou lovest this mere nothing more than God. At least hitherto thou hast done so. But at present, and evermore, it shall not be so. Henceforth my God shall be my all, and the sole object of my love.

VII. God bestows as much care on me as if I were alone in the world. Yes, His solicitude for me is so great that it would seem wholly confined to me; and all He does for the rest of mankind neither distracts nor diverts in the least His loving attention to me.

Ought not I, then, to attend to Him alone, as if He alone were in the world, or that there were no world at all? God to me alone, and I to God alone. God alone in my very mind and heart. God alone my life, my good, my all.

VIII. God loves me. It is a fact, and He never ceases to love me. Of this He gives me proof positive since He is constantly doing me good. Ah, He is ever heaping favors on me, and in a thousand ways.

And as He is unceasing in His love and bounty to me, so also is it His wish that I should be untiring in my love and gratitude to Him.

And as He wishes me to be unremitting in my love, He constantly bestows on me the grace to love Him.

And as He is ever bestowing on me His grace, I must ever be faithful to it, and ever love Him.

I must, then, be ever receiving and ever loving. This must be my employment and sole occupation the rest of my life.

IX. Of all the occupations on earth, there is none to compare with that of loving God, and not only that, but all united together are not equal to it. Why, then, should I not devote myself wholly to so sweet an employment ?

Oh, precious employment ! whoever devotes himself entirely to it has no reason to envy the happiness of others ; whereas, those who give themselves up to other pursuits have cause to envy souls solely addicted to the love of God.

To love God is the most glorious work of the saints, of the angels, and of God Himself ; and in it their only felicity consists.

X. A God of infinite majesty gives all His attention to me with infinite kindness, and communicates His grace to me that I may the better attend to Him and to His love. Should I not yield to so kind an invitation ?

Behold me, then, O my God, ready to yield to your love with my whole heart, now and forever.

XI. O my God, hitherto how I have been wanting in fidelity to you in my prayers and resolutions ! I used to say, in mind or words, that my heart was yours, and this heart was still mine, after protesting it belonged to you.

But now at least, O my God, I declare, in the sincerity of my soul, that I give you my heart without reserve. Yes, my God, it is yours : it is no longer mine, nor any other creature's ; it is entirely yours, dispose of it as you please.

XII. The operations of God in me are not by intervals, now offering me His grace, and then withdrawing it ; no, He acts not so toward me. As He constantly gives me being, so also He constantly gives me grace. It is entirely in my power to receive it always, and to love Him always.

How often have I had it in my power to love God, and have not loved Him ! It was all my own fault. And why was it that I did not love Him ? Ah, my God, it was your good will I should love you, but I willed it not. But now, O my God, it is my will, and my sincere will. Yes, your love, O my God ; your love, your love evermore.

XIII. My constant interior occupation shall be to keep my heart so

disengaged, so peaceful and submissive, that I may not give the least hindrance either to the production or increase of divine love in me. And from this moment, O my God, I present myself before your infinite Majesty, as disengaged, as peaceful and submissive, as I possibly can.

I sincerely wish to do all I can on my part ; do help me, O my God ! give me your love and increase it, till it arrives at the perfection you wish.

XIV. I no longer wish to look on my heart as belonging to me ; it is yours, O my God, and it is just you should be the master of it. I leave it, I abandon it to you ; henceforth govern it as you please.

The heart that is in me is no longer mine ; it is no longer my heart, it belongs to God, it is His, and I ought to leave it, and I do leave it, with the utmost respect, to my God. It is His property, His dominion, His abode, His temple.

XV. Since my only affair is to love God, all will turn out well. My sins will be effaced ; graces will be lavished on me ; my enemies will be vanquished ; my salvation will be secured, and God will be satisfied. From this very moment, and without further procrastination, I wish to love my God, and never cease to love Him.

Evermore I wish to do whatever His love wishes of me ; for His love wishes me to do nothing but what I am ready to do and suffer for Him.

XVI. It is not in my power to regulate the thoughts of my mind, and to have but those that I would wish, and such as would be agreeable to Him ; but the affections of my heart are at my disposition ; without giving myself, then, much trouble about my thoughts, I will use all my exertions to purify all the affections of my heart, that all may be for God. I shall be all heart for God, all love for God.

XVII. Oh, how badly time is employed in any other way than in loving God ! since all the time that is not employed in loving Him is not only lost for ever, but it is an eternity of love lost, which might have been gained by employing it in loving God.

Ah, my God, my God, how much time have I lost, and increase of your love ! But to lose no more, I purpose from this moment to love you evermore, and as much as I can, to the end of life, which I wish to prolong only to love you. And in the very moment of my death I wish to die through love of you.

XVIII. Why put off so long a time the enjoyment of the most precious thing in heaven above, or on earth below, and the possession of which entirely depends on myself ? Why delay to love God ? What more glorious, more useful, more sweet and excellent ? Why, then, resist the sweet solicitations, the enrapturing excitements of love ?

Ah, my God, pardon my past resistance. Divine love, no longer shall I resist you ; be mine, and I shall be ever yours.

XIX. O my God, my good God! it is yourself I seek. What I see, what I touch, what I taste, what I smell is not what I seek; what I conceive, what I imagine is not what I seek; goods, pleasures, and the things of the earth are not what I seek; it is you, my God, who are more within me than I can conceive, more close to me than I can imagine, more clear than what I see, more present than what I hear, more sweet than what I taste, more agreeable than what I smell, more evident than what I touch; it is you, O my God, that I seek.

You are more within me than I am myself. You are the spirit that I breathe. You are the soul of my soul, and the life of my life; you are my very life. It is from you I hold my being; it is through you I exist; for you I live. You are my all, and whatever is in me is not mine; it is yours, and shall ever be.

My God, you are my life, my good, my love, my all.

XX. The whole tenor of my life, as regards my mind, shall be a mild, respectful, and unceasing attention to you, O my God, and a sincere, peaceful, and entire submission of my heart to the operations of your grace.

This, O Lord, is the interior disposition of my soul, except your operations be different, or that you may require other operations from me.

Various motives of the love of God.

Many are the motives that should induce us to love God.

1. There is nothing more reasonable than to love such perfect bounty, so beneficent, so obliging, and to whom we are under new obligations every day.

2. There could be nothing more just than to obey the command of God to love Him.

3. There is nothing more glorious than to rise above the love of creatures, and to carry our love to the heart of God.

4. There is nothing more excellent, since all we could do is less than an atom, compared to an act of the love of God.

5. There is nothing more profitable to ourselves, for the love of God is sure to merit us His possession, together with all the good things of eternity.

6. Nothing could be more easy, since to love is all that is required of us, and to love a bounty and a beauty infinitely amiable; and we are made capable of loving Him, and are supplied by Himself with all the necessary graces to love Him.

7. There is nothing so necessary; for we must either love God or be damned. We must, of absolute necessity, either love God here, or burn with the fire of hell hereafter.

8. There is nothing more important for eternity. And in order to comprehend it the better, answer, yourself, the following questions :

Who is there that does not regret having omitted a thousand acts of the love of God he might have made, and would not wish to make as many henceforth as he has neglected for the past ? Who would not desire it with all his heart ?

Who would not desire to make as many acts of the love of God as did Magdalen since her conversion, and many other saints during their whole lives ? Or as many as have been, are, and will be made from the beginning to the end of the world.

You must allow that not to desire it with all one's strength is to be devoid of every sentiment of piety. Who would not wish to be able, alone, to make as many acts of the love of God as all saintly persons in this world shall ever have made ? Ah, if I could, how happy would I be !

What would I not give to obtain so great a blessing ?

On the contrary, who would wish to omit henceforth as many acts of the love of God as he has omitted up to the present time ? Who would like to be the cause of preventing God from being glorified as much as He was by Magdalen, and many other ardent lovers, during their entire lives ? Who would wish to prevent, if he could, all the acts of the love of God that have been, are, or will be made from the creation to the end of time ?

You will admit that to desire it one should have the heart of a demon. Who could find in his perverse heart the will to prevent so much love and glory to God ? Ah, how miserable would I be to be reduced to such extremity ! What would I not suffer rather than be the hindrance of so much good ?

Consider, now, two truths : the one that the saints love God more or less perfectly in heaven, according to the love they had for Him here on earth ; the other, that the love of each saint in eternity is more considerable in its duration than all the acts of the love of God made by the saints during life could be in number, since their number is necessarily limited : whereas the duration of the other is to have no end.

It is certain, then, that those who have not loved God in this life will not love Him in the other ; and consequently, dying in sin, they will, in some measure, deprive God of more glory than if they robbed Him of all the love the saints could have borne Him on earth.

It is likewise certain that all who neglect, in this life, to make an act of the love of God, though they should not be otherwise obliged to it and might omit it without sin, expose themselves, nevertheless, to the misfortune of loving God less perfectly throughout eternity ; and consequently, if by their greater fervor they do not repair this negligence, they will rob God of more glory than can be described.

After that, are you able to conceive all the evil of omissions alone? How often have we not omitted acts of the love of God, when we might have made them; and consequently, if we do not repair these omissions, how much love and glory will not God be deprived of for all eternity! None but you alone, O my God, can know how much we have robbed you of, since all that regards you is infinite, and within your comprehension alone.

Ah, Lord, it is only now I fully understand my obligation to love you the rest of my life with as much assiduity and perfection as I am able. For one act of love here, innumerable acts of love in heaven. Ah, my heart, let us love evermore; let us love not creatures, but the Creator. Let others place their affections on whatever objects they please; for our part, let us love no other but God, but let us love Him with a perfect and constant love.

Ah, if I could make you as many acts of contrition as I omitted acts of love! If I could repair the past! At least, O Lord, I will love you henceforth and evermore. Yes, I will love you, and make you beloved by as many as I can. To love you shall be my life, my food, my sole employ. Love! Love pure! Sovereign love! Uninterrupted love!

Remarks on the Litanies and Devotions.

It would seem difficult to find anything more capable of exciting in us compassion for our Lord Jesus Christ, than the consideration of His excruciating sufferings; second, of animating us to love Him with our whole heart, knowing that it is through love of us that He has undergone all His sufferings; third, of consoling and strengthening us in our trials; recollecting that our Saviour has sanctified them by His own, which were much greater; fourth, of inducing our Saviour to assist us to bear patiently all our afflictions, as He intended by His sufferings and His love.

It is not necessary to say them all each time; it would be better to say but part; but to say them more devoutly, and dwell particularly on what affects us most, either with compassion or love for our Redeemer, repeating several times those words that are most conformable to our state of life and to our wants. If, for instance, you are in want, say many times over: "Jesus, badly lodged, badly clothed, badly fed, have mercy on us;" and so on of the rest.

Important Devotions to the Adorable Trinity, to be performed before a crucifix.

Jesus, my Saviour and my God, I adore you and love you, expiring on the wood of the cross for all mankind, and for me in particular.

O holy and adorable Trinity, I adore you here present, and love you with my whole heart, in union with your love for the sacred heart of Jesus.

God the Father, have mercy on me, and grant me a lively faith, I beseech you, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

God the Son, have mercy on me, and strengthen my hope, I beseech you, through your precious death.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on me, and grant me an ardent charity, I beseech you, in the name of Jesus, my Saviour.

My God, I adore you here present, and I love you with all my heart, because you are infinitely good and amiable.

Other Devotions in honor of the Adorable Trinity.

Having made the sign of the cross and said the creed slowly and devoutly, pause awhile, and ask yourself whether your life be conformable to your creed, and if you would be ready, with the assistance of God's grace, and after the example of so many saints and martyrs, to give your life in proof of the truths you profess; then say:

Blessed and loved of all hearts be the holy and undivided Trinity, now and forever. Amen.

God the Father, of infinite power and wisdom, conduct me by your holy providence every moment of my life.

God the Son, of infinite mercy, keep me always in your holy presence.

God the Holy Ghost, of infinite charity, occupy me in loving you for time and eternity.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

We adore and glorify you, O God the Father, as our Creator.

We adore and glorify you, O God the Son, as our Redeemer.

We adore and glorify you, O God the Holy Ghost, as our sanctifier.

The whole is concluded by the following "Consecration" of heart to the love of the sublime Trinity, which may be renewed at Mass, before or after Communion, at visits to the blessed sacrament, etc.

Almighty and eternal God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, adorable Trinity of persons, in unity of essence, first principle of all things, to whom I owe my being and existence; prostrate before your sovereign Majesty, with feelings of the most humble and tender acknowledgment of which a creature is capable, in presence of the whole court of heaven, I devote and consecrate myself henceforth to the sole study of knowing, loving and serving you; hoping to obtain, of your infinite goodness, a general renewal of that faith of which you are the principal and object, that it may be purified and revived at a time when it is obscured in its heavenly brightness by the dissemination of so many errors, and the commission of so many crimes against your divine Majesty. For this desirable

purpose I unite with all those holy souls whose only object is to love; and in order to enable me the better to live henceforth in the constant practice of your holy love, I make an entire oblation to you of all that I have, or am, whether interior or exterior; forevermore I sacrifice myself in all things to your good pleasure, sincerely wishing to merge my will in yours, to strip myself of every feeling of self-interest, to have nothing at heart but what regards your honor and glory, to renounce all in order to depend entirely on you, to seek in all things only what is most agreeable to you; and, in fine, to do all in my power to enkindle your love in the hearts of all; that, being united here on earth in the tenderest bonds of His holy love, it may unite us forever in heaven, there to possess, praise and love you for ages without end. Amen.

Short Devotions for a Happy Death.

Say before your crucifix the Confiteor, in spirit of penance, and then make an act of contrition.

My God, I am sorry for having offended you, because you are infinitely good, and sin displeases you. I firmly purpose, with the assistance of your grace, to amend my life, to confess my sins, and to satisfy your divine justice as soon as possible.

One God in three persons, have mercy on me. I commend my soul and body into your hands in imitation of my dying Saviour.

God the Father, have mercy on me, now and at the hour of my death.

God the Son, have mercy on me, now and at the hour of my death.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on me, now and at the hour of my death.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me, now and at the hour of my death.

“Be always ready, for you know not the day nor the hour, nor the moment of your death.”

“Happy the servant whom his master shall find prepared to render him an account.”

Devotion to the blessed Sacrament.

Devoutly repeat before your crucifix the “Pater, Ave, Credo,” then say,

Divine Jesus, I believe that all power has been given you in heaven and on earth; purify my body and soul from all sin, and thereby render me worthy of appearing before you.

O Jesus, my Saviour and my God, I adore you in the blessed sacrament, and I acknowledge you true God, and true Man; I hope in you, I love you with my whole heart, I ardently desire to receive you, beloved of my soul, though I confess myself unworthy.

Lord Jesus, the life of my soul, sanctify me.

Lord Jesus, prepare and purify my body and my soul to receive you.

Lord Jesus, by your holy presence preserve my body and soul to life eternal.

Then say with St. Peter, St. Thomas, and St. Augustine,

You are my Lord and my God. O Son of the living God, give me grace to know you, and to know myself; be forever praised in the holy sacrament of our altars.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.”

“Woe to him who neglects to receive the author of life.”

An Offering of one's self to Jesus Christ.

Divine Saviour of our souls, have I hitherto been of the number of those who did not know you? It is but too true that I have not consecrated to you the dawn of my infancy, and the first-fruits of my reason. But, alas, have I been more faithful to you since I came to know by how many titles I belong to you? May I now be permitted to give myself up to you irrevocably, and to regard as a sacrilegious usurpation the least reserve I would make in my oblation.

No; it sufficeth not to offer you my body with its senses, I also present you my soul with all its faculties; strip them of all that they are, that they may receive no other impression but what you will please to give them. Use a sovereign dominion over them. And if it be your divine pleasure that I should suffer in body or mind, blessed be your will: I am equally satisfied, and refuse nothing at your hands, and ask nothing but your love, which I am determined to implore to my last breath.

What a consolation for me to know that, notwithstanding my many infidelities, you are graciously pleased to receive the homage of a heart that has been created only for you, and that deserves to be annihilated when it ceases to love you! For what will avail me to live, if it be not for you? And how long a time has it not been true to say that I was not living, since my heart did not love you? O the happy moment that I began to be attached to you, nevermore to be separated! Accept, then, O adorable Saviour, my divine and best Father, accept a heart ready prepared for your service; vouchsafe to take possession of it, and establish therein the empire of your love, so that no one else will ever be able to gain admission, except with you and for your sake. Should any one ask me for admission, I will answer him: “My heart is no longer mine: it belongs to Jesus Christ, to whom I have vowed it forever, and without reserve.”

I know full well, divine Saviour, that my affections are of no importance to you; you will find many others in my stead more worthy of your love, and more capable of glorifying you. But alas, if you reject me, whatever side I turn, where shall I find among creatures one to make up the loss of you?

After all, remember, my dearest Saviour, that it is you yourself who

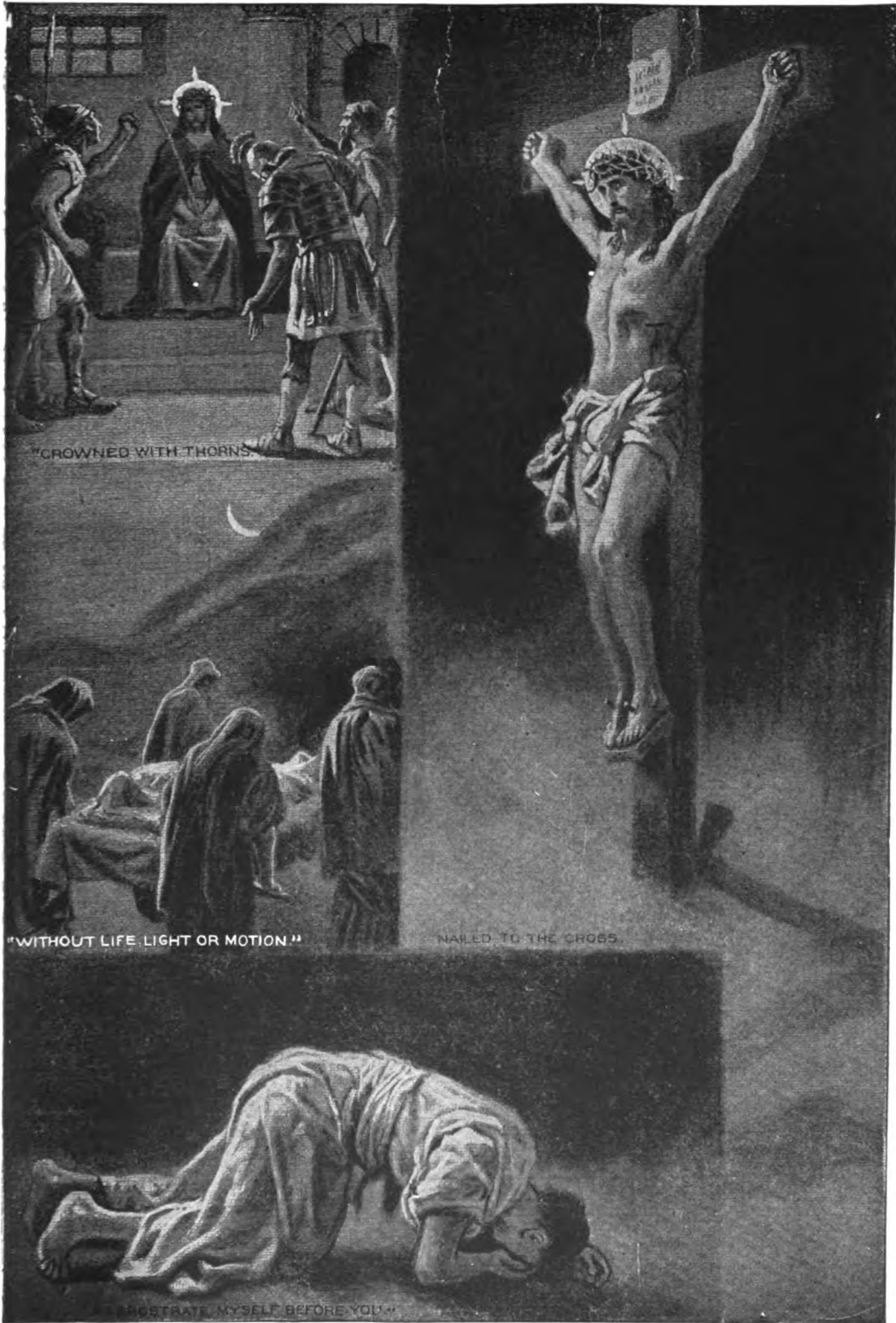
demand our heart, as if we were not too much honored to be allowed to offer it to you. What am I saying? You even commanded us to love you. Could I, then, be so ungrateful as to displease you by disobedience to so sweet a command? Accept this heart, since it ought to be yours; nevermore give it back to me, as I can have no trust in it while it is in my possession; dispose of it as you please; dispel its chilling coldness; enkindle in it a heavenly flame, capable of consuming its weakness; put all its springs in motion; enlarge its capacity, that it may possess you with more plenitude; or rather throw open your divine heart to me, that I may plunge into it, and there be consumed with the same love with which you burn.

A Prayer to Jesus Christ, to excite our confidence.

O divine Saviour of our souls, it is your infinite mercy that made you come down from heaven; but it is for the sake of sinners in particular that you left the bosom of your Father.

How I delight to hear you pronounce from your sacred lips that you are not come to judge, but to save the world; that not the just but sinners, were the principal object of your mission; that you were sent to seek the strayed sheep of the house of Israel! Although I did not find in your words or your sacred writings any motives of love or gratitude, could I look on you on the cross, and not know that it is from the top of this throne of grace and mercy, that you present to your eternal Father your blood and wounds, to efface the sins of the world? Why, then, should mine remain unpardoned? Would this abundant satisfaction be inefficacious in my regard alone? Would I dare to dishonor the glory of your cross by such diffidence; by sentiments so unworthy your tenderness for all creatures? No; in applying to myself the price of your most precious blood, I will put no bounds to my hope, nor to the joy of my return; I will approach you with all the confidence that your unbounded mercy will inspire.

I will not, however, consider myself acquitted of all debt to your divine justice; I will accept with gladness the blows which you shall lay on me through a feeling of compassion. Never will I complain of them, because I am aware that your rigors are paternal, and that your bowels are those of mercy and goodness for our weakness; the very faults that shall escape my attention, the temptations that shall disquiet me, will only serve to rouse my faith, to animate my hope, and to inflame my love with more zeal to satisfy your justice. I will say to you with simplicity of heart: "Lord, turn not away your eyes from me, for I am weak, and my weakness draws me into faults that humiliate me." I know that meekness is your leading attribute; you are the spotless Lamb, expected to efface the sins of the world.



"CROWNED WITH THORNS."

"WITHOUT LIFE, LIGHT OR MOTION."

"NAILED TO THE CROSS."

"PROSTRATE MYSELF BEFORE YOU."

MERCIFUL JESUS.

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True, after so many and long-continued infidelities, it is not permitted me to aspire to those favors which you bestow on those pure souls that share in your caresses, and are thereby encouraged to elevate themselves in mind to you, and repose in your bosom, there to discover mysteries of love that inundate them with the purest delights. These cherished souls in their prayers and secret adorations may well call you their spouse, the beloved of their heart; for me, it will suffice to call you the God of patience and consolation, the Father of mercies, the Saviour, the hope and salvation of sinners; for me be it sufficient to throw myself in spirit at your feet, to embrace them, to water them with my tears, and to believe myself safe from all the efforts of hell; for whoever is attached to you, O divine Saviour, and clothes himself with the inexhaustible merits of your sacred humanity, shall not perish eternally; and you have declared that whoever approaches you with confidence shall not be rejected (*et eum qui venit ad me, non ejiciam foras*).

Instructions on the Litany.

Since we are in the world for no other end but to love God, we should endeavor to love Him, as He has ordered us, "with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind."

But what shall we do to arrive at this perfection of divine love? Let us ask for it, and we shall quickly experience the truth of our Saviour's words, "Ask and you shall receive;" for God is more ready to give us than we are to ask.

As of ourselves we pray very ill, with coldness and irreverence, let us recommend ourselves to the prayers of the just, and engage the saints to obtain for us holy love, which we dare not expect from our own prayers; their great love for God and us makes them earnestly pray that God should be loved by us. God calls them His friends, and treats them as such; He hears all those that join in asking what is pleasing to Him; can we doubt, then, that He will grant us His holy love, when all the saints join in addressing their prayers to Him for so agreeable a request in our favor?

To invoke the saints, let us make use of the same Litany as the Church, guided by divine inspiration, recommends us for that end. O that it were used as much as it is useful! We never call a saint by his name but he hears us; we never invoke him but he answers us that very instant. As often as we say, "Holy Mary, pray for us;" "St. Michael, pray for us," etc., all the saints we invoke pray for us more earnestly than we do ourselves.

Imagine to yourself that a poor man, entering a rich town, asks an alms of every one of its inhabitants, who are all wealthy and contribute

bountifully and plentifully ; you will admit that this poor man, who at first had nothing, at the end becomes very rich. Well, then, there is no town in this world so opulent as paradise ; how poor soever we may be at the beginning of prayer we shall find ourselves very rich at the end, through the liberalities of the saints, heaped together, when we have said their litany devoutly.

As the effect of prayer is greater the more fervent it is, we should use our utmost endeavor to say the litany well.

First. Endeavor to begin it well, for the fault of the beginning makes the whole work imperfect ; now, to begin well, we must enter into a perfect tranquillity of body and mind, and make acts of sorrow for sin, of confusion of ourselves, of a sincere desire to love and confide in the goodness of God, and of His saints.

Second. Consider what the poor do when they ask alms ; they expose their necessity, and then wait awhile, before they redouble their prayers, or run to another to cry, "Give me your charity." We ought, then, to pause awhile at the name of each saint, and not pronounce them in haste, one after the other, as is too commonly done in saying litanies. Alas ! the poor ask for a morsel of bread better than we do for the love of God.

Third. Remember, moreover, that the end of this prayer is to excite you to love God ; and consequently, as soon as ever you perceive any pious affection, you ought to stop there, without troubling yourself about going farther, seeing it matters not to say them all, but to be touched, affected, and penetrated, every one in his own way.

Fourth. As prayer is chiefly in the heart, it is good, when you find yourself moved, not to speak a word, or very little, and even then it should be from the heart, rather than from the mouth ; otherwise it will be but an empty vocal prayer, without the heart's having any share in it : and often the devotion is so ill-performed, that it becomes rather a sin than a prayer.

Fifth. As the litany is to be said often, it is good to know that it may be said in divers ways ; the first and most ordinary way is, to make the proposition whole and entire, as, "God the Father of heaven, bestow on me divine love ; Holy Mary [etc.], obtain for me divine love." The second way is to omit the words, "Obtain for me," etc., and say only : "God the Father, divine love ; Holy Mother of God, divine love." This way is so much the more devout, as it is but a simple declaration of what we desire ; it was thus St. Magdalen addressed Jesus ; "He whom you love is sick."

The third and most simple of all is to pronounce only the name of Him whom you invoke without expressing what you demand : as "Eternal Father, Holy Mother," etc. After which you may stop awhile, saying in

your heart : " You know well what I want of you ; " as the poor in asking alms, often say only, " Sir," or " Madam," and then wait in silence for their charity.

The fourth way is, by altering the order of the words, for instance : " Holy love, eternal Father ; Divine love, holy Mother."

The fifth is, to make the prayer by way of question, as, " Who will give me holy love ? Is it you, eternal Father ? Who will obtain for me divine love ? Is it you, holy Mother of God ?"

The sixth is, to address ourselves to the heart of those we invoke, as to the source of love, as, " Heart of the eternal Father, give me your love ; Heart of Mary, obtain for me divine love," etc. ; or, by changing the words, thus : " Heart of the eternal Father, inflame me with your divine love," etc.

It is good at all times, when we remember any saint in particular, or see his image, to address his heart, and expose ours to him ; to rejoice with him that he has so much loved God, and to entreat him to obtain the same blessing for us.

The seventh way is, to add to the invocation some motives by way of meditation. The first motive is drawn from the person's relation to divine love, as : " Heavenly Father, fountain of divine love," etc. " Holy Mary, Mother of divine Love," etc. " Holy angels, immersed in divine love," etc. " Holy Apostles, preachers of divine love," etc. " Holy martyrs, who sacrificed your lives for divine love," etc. " Holy confessors, who suffered so much for divine love," etc. " Holy Virgins, who loved nothing but divine love," etc. These motives may be taken also from our selves, as : " Give me holy love. I am not capable of it." Lastly, these motives may be taken from the things themselves that we ask, as . " Give me holy love : it is precious, it is necessary, it is the hidden treasure of the gospel, and the pearl I ought to purchase at the cost of all things else," etc.

The eighth and last way, being proper for those that cannot meditate, is to regard only the names of the saints, or their images, or think of them only in their mind, without saying anything, and pause inwardly at the remembrance of each saint, with a desire and confidence of obtaining holy love through their intercession.

To conclude all that regards the use of the holy litany, you will observe that you may add to it the saints to whom you have a particular devotion, your good angel, your patron saint, the patron of the parish, St. Joseph, St. Joachim, and St. Anne, because they are of the holy family ; St. Patrick, St. Columb, St. Bridget, St. Kyran, St. Kenny, St. Malachy, St. Lawrence, and so of the patrons of each diocese ; St. Francis Xavier, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catharine of Sienna, and St. Teresa, etc.

We may also say the litany to implore other graces as well as that of divine love, such as purity, patience, humility, meekness, perseverance, the conversion of sinners and infidels, deliverance of the souls in purgatory, and for such as are at the point of death, etc.; and confessors and directors may prescribe it as penance to those whom they direct.

Those who cannot meditate, of whom the number is great, may very usefully employ their time of prayer, in saying leisurely a litany as they shall find most useful and easy, and productive of most devotion; and will find it a profitable sort of prayer, which, perhaps, will open their mind to contemplation, to frequent and familiar entertainment with God, and to the continual exercise of His love.

Act of the love of God.

I love you, O sovereign bounty, O infinite excellence, O most holy and adorable Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one true God, infinitely perfect, and sovereignly good and amiable. I love you with my whole heart and soul and with all my might. I love you above all things, more than all things else, more than my life and myself, because you alone are worthy of my love. I offer you all my reverence, all my adorations, all my submission, all my obedience, all my services, all my zeal. O my divine Master, infinitely great, who is like unto you? Adorable Majesty, in whose presence heaven and earth, angels and men are so many nothings, how could I prefer any creature to you in the exercise of my love? You are infinite goodness itself, infinite wisdom, infinite beauty, infinite mercy, infinite liberality, infinite sweetness, infinite charity; in a word, you possess all possible perfections, and all infinite. And, withal, you are my Creator, my Redeemer, my Master, my Father, and my King, my last end, and final beatitude; you are my all. I am indebted to you for all that I have, and all that I am, and for all that I hope for. Yes, I love you, and wish always to love you alone, and desire to love you always, more ardently and more perfectly. Amen.

Act of the love of Jesus.

O divine Jesus, only Son of God, equal to Him in all things, eternal, immense, infinitely wise, good, and holy; you are, therefore, deserving of the same love. O how this truth delights me! how my heart is charmed with the thought that it can and ought to love you as much as God, with a love as unbounded, as pure, as lively, and as tender as it is capable of! So do I love you, and shall ever love you, my all-amiable Jesus! O that I were master of all the hearts that do not love you, that I might consecrate them all to a duty so just and sweet! I offer you, in compensation, the love of all saints and angels. Increase and inflame more and more every day the love that your grace has enkindled in my

heart for your adorable person. Your love and grace are the only objects of my ambition for time and eternity. Amen.

Of the incomparable merits of Jesus.

We are not sufficiently instructed in the knowledge of the merits of Jesus, and we should labor to know more fully their extent, in order to set a greater value on them, and to have the more love and gratitude for Him.

It is not without reason that Jesus is called by that blessed name, which signifies Saviour, because He has acquired for us infinite merits, to blot out our sins, and to purchase for us all sorts of graces ; this will enable us to understand something of His incomparable worth.

The two things that cause an offence or injury to be the more grievous and enormous, cause likewise the satisfaction and reparation made for them to be more inconsiderable and slight, and these are, the dignity of the offended, and the vileness of the offender. Man is but a wretched creature, and God is so great and excellent that an offence offered Him increases in proportion to His greatness and excellence.

Now these very considerations, which make the offence appear the more grievous, lessen the value of the satisfaction ; for the higher the person offended is raised above us in dignity, and the meaner we are in comparison of him, the less is the satisfaction we make him : therefore, God being infinitely greater than men and angels, the offence offered Him is great to an incomprehensible degree, and far beyond any satisfaction that could be made Him by all His creatures together, and consequently should remain unexpiated, and proves the necessity of a Jesus, or Saviour, who should be more than a creature, who should be both God and man.

He should be man, to be capable of meriting ; He should be God, to be capable of infinite merit : He should be man, to humble Himself before God, who was offended ; He should be God, to give His humility an infinite value ; a man, to pray for sinners, a God, to deserve to be heard, all which are found in Jesus. And as the satisfaction is of less value when made by a mean person, so the more exalted the person is, and the greater his sanctity, the greater and more meritorious is the satisfaction he makes : such is the glory of Jesus.

Jesus is one of the three persons of the holy Trinity, endowed with infinite and uncreated sanctity ; therefore His satisfaction to His Father is equal to the value and dignity of His person, and the greatness of His sanctity, and is, consequently, infinite in merit, to impetrate, to satisfy, the justice of His Father, to blot out all our sins and obtain all sorts of favors for us.

Further, one mortal sin alone, as it is an offence to God, is so great an evil that all men and angels, and the Mother of God herself, might pass millions of years in the most fervent prayer and rigid penance to satisfy for it, and yet would not be able; Jesus alone, in the scale of the divine balance, would weigh more than all the prayers and penances and good works of all the saints; for their merit would still be limited; but the merits of Jesus alone are infinite, by reason of the dignity and sanctity of His person and exalted glory, and have sufficiently and superabundantly satisfied for our sins. "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all sin," original, actual, mortal, and venial.

Of original sins, alone, the number is prodigious; every one coming into the world is infected with it, except our Saviour and His blessed Mother, and Adam and Eve, who, though they had not contracted it, yet were the original source and cause of it by their actual sins; so many millions of persons that were in the world, that are, and will be to the end of time, then reckon the number of original sins, and Jesus satisfied for them all. Glory be to His holy name!

What shall we say of the number of actual sins? Every single person is born with one original sin; but who is there, who has lived beyond the years of discretion, without more actual sins than one? One person committed more than a thousand, another ten thousand, a third a hundred thousand; many, whose lives have been, are at present, and will be, nothing but a continuation of sin, a tissue of iniquity, in thought, word, and work, omission and commission; so that one single person shall have committed more actual sins than a hundred thousand persons. If, therefore, all the actual sins were put together, how prodigious will the number appear!

Let us now join these two things together: the first, one single sin is so grievous and enormous, so far beyond the merits of men and angels, that they could never satisfy for it by all their prayers and penances and torments for innumerable ages; the other, that Jesus Christ has satisfied, not for one single sin, but for all that have been, or will be committed, and that superabundantly, His merits infinitely surpassing this frightful heap of sins. Oh, how vast, how astonishing, how incomprehensible, are the merits of the King of glory!

Let us proceed farther, and suppose that besides this world there were millions of others, and that the least of them were a hundred thousand times greater and more populous than this, and that each of them were still growing bigger and fuller of inhabitants, and each inhabitant an incarnate devil, and that the most innocent of these monsters offended God more in one day than all the human beings that ever have been, or will be, in the world; that all their thoughts were abominations, all their words

blasphemies, all their actions injustices, murders, impurities, and sacrileges—all this is horrible: nevertheless, all this heap of sins, this abyss of horrors, this astonishing excess of wickedness—and suppose a million more—is infinitely less than the merits of Christ; all this infamy dishonors God less than the merits of Jesus glorify Him.

Jesus has superabundantly satisfied for all this; and, what is more, one single action of His, the very least of His sufferings, the least cold endured in one of His fingers, one good desire, one prayer presented to His Father for us, has so much merit, that by it alone He has satisfied for all this world of sins. The wickedness of men, let it increase to ever so high a degree, shall never be able to come near the infinite merits of the least action or suffering of the glorious Jesus.

Oh, how superabundantly has Jesus satisfied for us! The eternal Father justly gave Him the glorious and holy name of Jesus, the sacred name of Saviour. And Jesus has been so generous and liberal toward us, that when only one of His actions or sufferings might have fully satisfied for all our sins, yet His love did not allow Him to stop there, but for many years He performed such wonders, and suffered so many prodigious miseries, all of infinite merit; endured so many pains, shed so many tears, spilt His blood to the last drop, and laid down His life on the cross, in the violence and force of most bitter torments, and all the excess of reproach and shame, and why all this but to be more than our sufficient Saviour? which made the royal prophet sing: “With him there is plentiful redemption; and there is no sort of favor that he has not merited for us.”

If God the Father, in view of the merits of Jesus, made us all seraphs in love, and cherubs in light, and more than Mary and all the angels in holiness, and peopled more worlds with more saints, and though the three adorable persons of the blessed Trinity should unite themselves hypostatically to each of us to make us all God-men, and that, by a communication of idioms, we become God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—Jesus has merited all this.

Have we not reason, then, to be surprised at the greatness of the merits of Jesus, and His incomparable love toward us? We must be all love for Him, and in the earnestness of our souls, ask pardon of the Father, through His infinite merits: “Eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, pardon me all my sins, through the merits of your dear Son, our glorious Saviour. You best know what graces and favors I stand in need of, both now and at the end of my life, in order to live and die in your love—I beg them of you. It is true I deserve none, but Jesus has merited them all for me, and it is through His merits I beseech you to grant them to me.” The more to glorify Jesus, let us do all in our power to hinder sin,

and to extirpate it from the world as being offensive to Jesus, and endeavor to procure that all the world may know, love, and serve Jesus; that He may be the beginning and the end of all our designs and actions. Whether in prosperity or adversity, let us praise and bless Jesus; if in want, let us have recourse to Jesus. Let us begin the day by pronouncing the holy name of Jesus, and continue it, saying, "Jesus: whether we live or die, we will invoke and love Jesus, to the end that after death we may pass from earth to heaven, there to love, bless, and praise forever our amiable, adorable, and infinitely glorious Jesus, to whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

DEVOUT EXERCISES PROPER FOR FRIDAYS.

To Sinners, at the sight of the Crucifix.

See, wicked sinner, what your sins have done
Your Saviour crucified, who is God and man !
Endeavor not on Jews the blame to lay,
You are a deicide as well as they.
With contrite heart your sinful life deplore,
The best sacrifice is to sin no more.
He'd rather you'd from tears and sins refrain
Than weep, though tears of blood, and sin again.
He the sufferings of his Lord bewails,
O'er whom His precepts and His life prevails ;
To weep, and sin again, is but a jest,
He then weeps best, who doth now sin the least.
To weep, and moan, and sigh, and still to sin,
Is but to nail Him on the cross again ;
With holy living, He's better pleased and won,
Than mixing blood with blood, and wounds anon.

And to procure a tenderness and compassion for your crucified Saviour, say to Him deliberately and affectionately what follows, stopping where tenderness shall make you sensible that you should give way to love, affection, sorrow, and compunction.

The sinner at the view of the Crucifix.

It is true, then, my Jesus is dead. He is dead, who should never have died. He is dead, whose life was more precious than all the lives in the world. He is dead, who gives life to all the world. The Son of God is dead for the sins of men. The lamb is dead for the wolf; the lord for the slave; the innocent for the guilty.

O my Jesus, it is you I behold dead, and stretched out on the cross, who breathed nothing but love and blessings toward all creatures, whom I behold breathless and lifeless, all cold and dead.

It is you, adorable head, that was adored in heaven by all the blessed spirits, which so often, in the course of your life, lay on hay, on grass, on

the ground, without so much as a stone for your pillow ; which has been so often drenched with rain, buffeted with winds, which I behold pierced on all sides, crowned with thorns, drowned in blood, bending, without sense, motion, or life. Ah, I prostrate myself before you, more in heart than body, to the very abyss of my nothingness ; there I revere, honor, bless, and adore you with all my heart.

Is it your adorable face, a thousand times more beautiful than the sun, on which the angels delight to gaze, that I see spit upon, all bruised, and red with streams of blood running from the wounds of your sacred head, crowned with thorns ? I contemplate you with eyes of compassion and veneration, and adore you with all my heart.

Oh, sweet and merciful eyes, which wept so much for us, which looked on your sufferings and cross with joy for the love of us, and on us with so much pity and compassion, do I behold you filled with dust and blood, without life, light, or motion ? Ah ! may I never open mine again, but to contemplate you closed in death, and to adore you with all my heart !

Is it your blessed mouth, that has wrought so many miracles in our favor, that has given such heavenly instructions for living well, and gaining heaven, which I behold in the extremity of thirst, moistened only with vinegar and gall ? Ah, were I permitted to press my lips to yours ! but I dare not. At least I bless, honor, praise and adore you with my whole heart. Oh, almighty hands, that made heaven and earth, and wrought so many miracles, and still support us in existence, I regret to see you made weak, and nailed to the cross. Oh, sacred hands, so liberal and beneficent, I embrace and kiss you from my heart.

Oh, adorable feet, that have traveled so much, all bare for me, that have taken so many steps and journeys for me, which I behold fixed to a cross. I bend my knees and my whole self before you, and with your permission I desire to embrace and kiss you with the same love and affection as Magdalen did.

Lastly, oh, sacred heart of my Jesus, in which are shut up all the treasures of the Divinity, and which entertains so great a love for me, do I behold you pierced through, and pouring out the last drop of your blood for me ? I adore you, with all the grateful hearts in heaven, on earth, and in purgatory, that you have filled with your love. O my Jesus, that through this wound in your sacred side, and by my mouth, your heart might enter into my heart, or my heart into yours, to be wholly transformed into it !

Oh, heart, the adorable source of all the love which has purified and sanctified so many hearts, purify and sanctify mine too, to the end I may be all love for you, as you have been, and are still, all love toward me.

But my sweetest Jesus, why have you been thus treated ? and by

whom? who was it that nailed you to this wood? Alas! it was neither Turks nor heathens; neither was it Jews alone; who, then, my Saviour, who?

Ah, sorrowful but true answer, it was I who spit on your face, plucked your hair and beard, covered you with wounds, crowned you with thorns; who, in the extremity of your thirst, gave you vinegar and gall to drink, and pierced your feet, and hands, and side. I was the murderer and executioner, I own it to heaven and earth, to your glory and my own shame. But, O my Jesus, seeing that after so many cruelties perpetrated against you, you still preserve me in my being, and even bestow new graces on me, I accept them with the most heartfelt thanks, and protest that I will nevermore be your murderer and executioner in committing new sins; that I will no more be, as I have been, more obdurate and insensible than the very rocks, which split asunder to show the sense they had of your death.

Shall not I commiserate you, by whom and for whom you have suffered so much? Ah, I would gladly heap up in my heart all the tenderest compassions that have ever galled the hearts of those who have had the most sensibility, the tenderest love, and the strongest compassion for you, to the end that I may employ them all in sorrowing after you in your sufferings.

O St. John, St. Magdalen, dear lovers of Jesus, but above all, O sacred Virgin, pour into my heart, not a single drop, but all your sorrow and affliction of heart, for which you have no more occasion in heaven; cause to flow into my heart all that compassion which wounded yours, when you beheld your beloved Son, suffering, dying, and dead in your arms. Ah, if my Saviour be dead of His feeling love for me, may my lot be to die also of true compassion for Him.

But, my Jesus, whereas it is your will that I should continue in life, I cast myself at your feet, asking pardon of you for all my sins, with all the confusion, sorrow, and grief I am capable of. I wish I could shed tears of blood to expiate them. Oh, that my heart could break with sorrow, as was the happiness of so many others! But since it is not your holy and well-pleasing will that compassion for your sufferings or contrition for my sins should cost me my life, pardon me, O Lord, though I do not deserve it; no, I deserve hell, and have deserved it a thousand times. But, my Saviour, the pardon you have granted so many makes me hope that you will pardon me, too. You pardoned Peter, who so basely denied you. You pardoned the thief as soon as he asked it. You prayed for your executioners, while they abused and derided you. The prayer I address you is your own, and surely you did not teach me to pray, in order to refuse me, and to frustrate your prayers and mine of their effect. More-

over, my adorable Saviour, the prayer you addressed to your eternal Father for me now depends on yourself, since He has put all power in your hands, and established you the sovereign judge of the living and the dead.

Grant us, then, O charitable Saviour, grant us the pardon, which you have not only desired but demanded for us, and which is now in your power to grant. We beg it of you, one for another, and for all those to whom we are most obliged, and whom we have in any manner drawn into sin. We beg it of you by all your sacred wounds, and precious blood, which was seven times shed—at your circumcision, agony in the garden, whipping, crowning with thorns, being stripped of your clothes that were glued by your blood to your sacred body, at your crucifixion, and when your sacred side was opened with a lance. We beg it of you by that blood that was shed, not only for us but by us. We beg it by that blood that cries to heaven for us, not for vengeance but for mercy.

Lastly, we beg it through the merits of your precious blood, far surpassing all the guilt of our sins; with it we cry out to you, mercy, good Jesus, mercy! pour one drop of it into every one of our hearts, to blot out our sins. The pardon we ask and hope for will but increase our obligations and sorrows, that after so many offences you should still have the clemency to forgive us. What excess of cruelty in us to you; what excess of goodness in you to us, O sweet Jesus!

Ah, I can go no farther, but be sorry for my sins; a feeling of sincere gratitude for your goodness, a compassion for your sufferings, and the amazing excess of your love, leave me speechless. Groans and sighs stop my breath; my heart melts within me; grief overwhelms me and will not let me speak.

And, since I can no longer express my grief, permit me, O adorable Jesus, to step aside, and cast myself at your feet, there to let my heart tell you what my tongue cannot. Ah, Jesus! Ah, sin! Ah, cruelty! Ah, goodness! Ah, love!

A Prayer to obtain the love of God.

My Jesus, what you most of all require of me, is what I most earnestly crave of you—to love you above all things. It seems to me, that if I could, I would have an overflowing love for you. Oh, would to God I had so great a love for you as to be able to love you perfectly!

But, O my Jesus, this I cannot have of myself, but you can give it me, easily and abundantly, whose power is infinite. Ah, that I had as much love for you as you are able to bestow on me, and as you deserve! At least, grant me what you think fit; my heart is ready, my Jesus, and if it be not, or if there still be any impediments to the fullness of your love, the remedy is in your power; your graces are stronger than my weakness

and malice : vouchsafe, then, to **grant** them to me. It is true, I am unworthy of them : I deserve them not, but you deserve that I should love you perfectly, and in order to do that I have need of your graces ; grant me the means I stand in need of to arrive at this holy end ; give me abundance of grace, that I may return abundance of love. And to oblige you the more to grant them, consider not, O my Jesus, my sins and disorders, unless it be to have pity on them, but look on the great things you have done and suffered for me, that I should love you. Oh, may I ever love you as you deserve, to the utmost of my power, and according to the fullness of your holy grace. Amen.

Invocation of the Holy Ghost.

O my God, my firm belief is, that your eyes are fixed on me at this moment. The angels are now trembling before you, and can I, a poor nothing, presume to appear in your holy presence ? Pardon my sins and unworthiness, and enable me to invoke you, the best of fathers.

O divine spirit of love, of light and of life, enliven me in my devotions ; enlighten my mind with your heavenly rays ; inflame my will with the fire of your divine love ; destroy in me the spirit of the world and its dissipation ; let me taste how sweet the Lord is, and render me acceptable to His divine Majesty.

O my God, dispel the darkness of my understanding by the beaming of your countenance ; strengthen its weakness and disperse the gloom of worldly distractions, that nothing may ever come between me and you, the sole object of my love.

Divine spirit, all love ; love of the Father and Son ; personal, substantial, eternal, infinite love ; Ah, incomprehensible love, either draw us to you, or let us draw you to us, to change us all into love, to be no more anything but love. Come to us, O divine love, behold our hearts, which you sought for so long, and which so often shunned you, now open, ready to receive you.

Divine love, you pursued us when we were running away from you : now that we are seeking you will you fly from us ? No, for as you sought and loved us from the beginning, so will you continue to do, and will have us seek you with holy perseverance ; for, without your preventing us, we would have run astray and mixed in the gulf of the world. Come, then, divine love, come, we conjure you ; fill our hearts—they sigh after you.

Come, O Holy Ghost, take possession of the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle therein the fire of this divine love ; send forth your spirit, and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who did instruct the hearts of your faithful by the illustra-

tion of the Holy Spirit, grant that in the same spirit we may be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We have never been charmed with the desire of possessing you, as we are now: your right hand wounded us with this dart of love. Come into our hearts with all your grace, and make them all your own, as they renounce all others but you. Ah, vouchsafe to hear us, and graciously to grant us our request.

Come, then, in this happy hour, that, having drawn us to yourself during life, you may also draw us to you after death; that we may pass from fire to fire, and from love to love; from the love of grace here to the beatific love in heaven, where, every other employment ceasing, we shall be all loved and all lovers, all love in the divine flames of paradise, that will banish our enemies, disperse our miseries, and fill us forever with unspeakable joys.

Ah, when shall this be, O divine love? When shall we be in possession of this incomparable happiness? So violent shall be our longings and our love while we are in this world, that after death there shall be no stop nor hindrance to this perfect love. Be it so, O divine love. Amen.

A Prayer to our Lord to obtain a happy Death.

O my good Jesus, I beg of you, most humbly and earnestly, that grace which, above all others, is most important for your glory and my own salvation—final grace, perseverance in grace and a happy death; this is what we cannot merit with all the services imaginable, but which you have merited for us with all the rest.

This grace is to die in your friendship and love, that is, to die, having habitual grace and love in our souls, as all the saints have died. Though I should lack all the rest, a priest to absolve me, or the last sacraments to console me, when and wheresoever I shall die, I shall have all I want in your love to gain a happy eternity. O Jesus, may I die the death of the just!

But, O my Jesus, if it be your good pleasure, may I die, not only in habitual but also in actual love. I would wish that with my last breath I could breathe acts of love, and that I could love expiring, and expire loving.

Thus died the glorious St. Joseph, who, expiring, had the honor to have you on one side of him, and your blessed Mother on the other, and found himself at the same time dying and loving you. Thus died the great St. Ambrose, who, after having communicated with all the love he could, immediately gave up his spirit, and after having received you, was received by you into heaven, there to love you till now, and for all eternity.

Thus died St. Ignatius, in the softest accents of love still repeating and breathing forth the sacred name of Jesus. And thus died many others who had their senses to the last gasp, and whose love never ceased but with their lives. I beg of you, my Lord and my God, through the merits and prayers of these great saints, to grant me so precious a death, that the last moments of my life may be employed in loving you.

But, O my Jesus, allow me to continue to entreat you that I may die not only in your love, but also for your love, namely, for some Christian virtue, for faith, chastity or charity, as the martyrs died. This is the desire of my heart ; this, by your divine grace, is the disposition in which I desire to remain firm and constant in your service, and to suffer death rather than lose your grace and love by any mortal sin. O my Jesus, the prayer I make to you for myself I wish to be heard also for others, that all may die well for the future.

And as this is the grace of graces, on which depends our happy or miserable eternity—to be forever with you or separated from you, I ask it for every one of us, by the most powerful motives, the glory of your Father, the greatness of your merits, the excess of your love, the intercession of your blessed Mother, and all the angels and saints, and with all the dispositions of faith, humility and confidence, to the end that having done, on my part, all that my weakness could, you may do according to your infinite bounty.

Ah, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through the intercession of those great saints who gave their blood and lives rather than offend you, vouchsafe to grant me their favor and grace to enable me to testify my fidelity to you by the effusion of my blood and the loss of my life. Nay, more, there is a death that charms me more, and after which I sigh : it is that I may die, not only in your love, and for your love, but, above all, that I may die of love for you, that the force of your love may force my soul out of my body, and transport it to you. Oh, sweet death ! Oh, precious death ! Oh, death of love !

It was thus the seraphic St. Francis died ; and as St. Francis de Sales says of him, he could not fail to die this death, for he loved God too well in life to fail to die of love. Thus died St. Teresa, who revealed after her death that she died of the violence of love.

It was thus a devout pilgrim died on Mount Calvary, who, after having deeply reflected that it was there his Saviour had died for him, and after having again and again kissed the ground where they had placed the cross, oppressed in heart by an excessive violence of love and compassion for his great and dear Master, breathed out his soul that very moment.

It was thus, too, that another pilgrim, having visited all the holy places, and meditated on the mysteries that were there accomplished, at length

being on Mount Olivet, and seeing the impressions of the sacred feet of our Lord on the rock, and having kissed and watered them with his tears, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, as if he had seen our Lord, was transported with so ardent a desire to go to Him, that he died on the spot ; and when his body was opened to discover the cause of his death, these words were found written in his heart, as in that of St. Ignatius, martyr : JESUS MY LOVE.

And whereas, my Saviour, your hands are not shortened, nor your bounty diminished in our own days, thus a holy priest died in France of the sweet violence of love, and dying, said, " O my love, my love, you have conquered ; you have overcome me." His body burned so hot after his death that it could not be touched without being scorched, and a person of bad life approaching it, the heat redoubled so, and the wretch was so heated, that ever after he lived extremely well.

But above all, it was thus your blessed Mother died, who ought to have died the very moment of her conception, for even then she received so violent a dart of love that it surpassed the love of all the saints, which she could not have borne if she had not been miraculously sustained by you while she lived ; till at length, ardently desiring to see you in the splendor of your glory, she made her request, which was immediately heard, and love, drawing her beauteous soul from her body, assumed her up into heaven ; her soul and body, being afterward united, and quitting the tomb, went to take possession with you of a magnificent throne above all the blessed.

Ah, my Jesus, if it be not too great a presumption in me, if my prayer do not offend you, I beg of you, through the intercession of those holy souls to whom you have granted so many and so great favors, and particularly through the prayers of your blessed Mother, that I may die of love for you ; that your love may put an end to my days ; that it may increase to such a degree in me, and burn to such a height, as to separate my soul from the body it animates, and transport it to the object it loves, which is no other than you, my amiable, my adorable, and my admirable Jesus.

And to sum up all my desires regarding death, I desire to die for you, as you have died for me. And if I be not a martyr in effect, by your grace I am one in desire and will, and if it be not my lot to die by the violence of torments, I accept the death of the violence of sickness. And if it be martyrdom to die for faith, charity or chastity, it is also martyrdom to die for justice. Therefore I would die to satisfy your justice, which will have me undergo the death I deserve. Ah, my Jesus, it is just I should die so. I adore your sentence and submit to it ; I accept death from your hands, as St. Francis did the stigmata from a seraph, who im-

pressed them on him by your order. I accept my death not only from the course of nature, but as from your divine hands, and as you have accepted yours, not as from the hands of the Jews or executioners, but from those of your eternal Father.

And to conclude, my amiable Saviour, in the words of your servant, St. Francis, as you yielded to death for the love of me, grant me grace to die for love of you. O sacred love of my Jesus, may you give me the happy blow, and strike me out of this unfortunate world, where you are so little loved, and so much offended, and raise me up to the regions of bliss, where you are never offended, and so perfectly loved for eternal ages. Amen.

AN EASY AND EFFECTUAL METHOD OF THINKING OFTEN OF GOD IN THE DAY.

“ Put me as a signet on your arm.” (Cant. viii. 6.)

“ Seek the Lord, and take courage: seek his face always.” (Psa. x. 4.)

It cannot be expressed how much we lose, every day, of grace in this world and of glory in the other, for ourselves and God, by forgetting our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the remedy for which, and the easiest means to repair it, is to have some signal or visible mark to point out our neglect, and cause us to make short and frequent prayers every day: the cross, of all the rest, is the most venerable and august, and the most capable of animating us, as being the instrument of our redemption, and the badge of a Christian.

For this reason many wear a cross on their sleeves of silk or some other thread, or of two crossed pins, in memory of our crucified Lord; and the following distichs will help their memory to prayer:

My God, all things may serve a constant soul;
This very cross my wandering thoughts control;
And that our minds may steadfast on thee dwell,
This lovely mark (†) shall still our hearts compel.

But if one will not carry a cross thus, let him make use of one pin only, as is usually done for a remembrancer, or of some other sensible object; for without that, unless he be continually prevented by God, he will be a great loser, in forgetting his duty and omitting many acts which this signal would have occasioned him to produce. And this is so true, that the best Christians, and those that take most care to be always in the presence of God, are those who complain most of forgetting Him so easily and so often.

Let him not dissuade others from using this symbol of the cross, or advise them to give it up; else let them make use of some other signal to the same end. If they should do otherwise, they will deprive our Lord

of a great deal of glory, and souls of a great deal of merit. Whereas, by approving this holy practice, and exhorting to it, he will contribute to the good that will come from it, and will one day receive a great reward.

There is no determinate fixed prayer ; every one may say that which pleases him most, according to his devotion, in heart or words, but it should be always short and fervent. Say that which presents itself first, or in which you find the greatest relish, as : " O my Jesus ! O my love ! O my dearest Saviour ! my God, and my all ! " Or, without saying anything, look amorously on your cross or crucifix, or kiss it, or incline your head and heart sweetly toward it. Or make a compact with God, that so often as you look on, or kiss this signal, you intend to practise the most excellent acts of all virtues, of faith, of hope, and of love, and to pray for the living, the dying and the dead, and particularly for those you are most obliged to pray for.

Some persons kiss their signal thirty-three times a day, in honor of the years of the life of our Lord. And in order to know the consequence of every moment, well or ill employed, either in the practice or omission of a good prayer or act of virtue, the following verses should be well considered :

Or loss, or gain, of moments we believe,
So many happy eternities to give,
Or of eternal happiness deprive.

That is, every moment, well or ill employed, brings the loss or the gain of an eternity of glory to God and to ourselves. Surely this ought to be a sufficient motive to encourage us to spend every moment well, and to squander as few as possible, not only in sin, but in different actions, without referring them to God ; and it is certain that the moments in which we look on, or kiss our signal with devotion are well employed.

This practice is also an easy and efficacious means to get rid of the sin we are most addicted to, and to acquire the virtue we stand most in need of : First, by reminding us to be aware of the sin, and to practise the contrary virtue. Second, by calling to our mind that God is present, that this remembrance may keep us from sin, and urge us to practise virtue with more fervor. Third, to remind us often to ask pardon of God for our sins, and grace nevermore to return to them, or to beg of Him some virtue, as :

"My God, I beg pardon of you for all my intemperances, impurities, impatience, swearing, lying, backbiting, and other sins, and I beg of you the grace of never offending you ; grant me patience, humility, chastity," etc.

Experience shows that fidelity to these practices obtains victory over sin, and grace to acquire the opposite virtues. Cultivate them, then, and

recommend them to others, and both you and they will find the good effects of them, and will be rewarded by life eternal.

ACTS BEFORE MASS.

A Prayer before the Acts.

O almighty and eternal God ! grant unto us an increase of faith, hope, and charity ; and that we may obtain what thou hast promised, make us love and practise what thou commandest ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

An Act of Contrition.

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee ; and I detest my sins most sincerely, because they are displeasing to thee, my God, whom I should never have ceased to adore and love. I now firmly purpose, by the assistance of thy holy grace, nevermore to offend thee ; and to avoid for the future, to the utmost of my power, all dangerous occasions which might expose me to sin.

An Act of Faith.

O my God, I firmly believe that thou art one only God, the Creator and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, infinitely great, infinitely good, and infinitely perfect. I firmly believe that in thee, one only God, there are three divine persons, really distinct and in all things equal, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I firmly believe that God the Son, the second person of the most holy Trinity, became man ; that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and was born of the Virgin Mary ; that He suffered and died on a cross to redeem and save us ; that He arose on the third day from the dead ; that He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, always living to make intercession for us ; that He will come at the end of the world to judge mankind, and render to everyone according to his works ; that He will reward the good with eternal happiness, and condemn the wicked to the everlasting pains of hell. I believe these, and all other articles which the holy Roman Catholic Church proposes to our belief, because thou, my God, the infallible Truth, hast revealed them ; and thou hast commanded us to hear the Church, which is the pillar and the ground of truth. In this faith I am firmly resolved, through thy holy grace, to live and die.

An Act of Hope.

O my God, who hast graciously promised every blessing, even heaven itself, through Jesus Christ, to those who keep thy commandments : relying on thy power which is infinite, thy mercies which are over all thy works, and thy promises to which thou art always faithful, I confidently

hope to obtain the pardon of my past sins, which I now detest ; grace to serve thee faithfully in this life, by doing the good works thou hast commanded, and eternal happiness in the next, through my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

An Act of Charity.

O my God, my Creator, my Redeemer, my sovereign good, whose boundless charity to me has been unceasing, and whose infinite perfections adoring angels behold with unspeakable delight, I love thee with my whole heart and soul, and, above all things, because thou alone art worthy of my love ; and for thy sake I love my neighbor as myself. Oh, teach me, my gracious God, to love thee daily more and more ; and mercifully grant that, having loved thee on earth, I may love and enjoy thee forever in heaven.

A Prayer before Mass.

O merciful Father, who didst so love the world as to give up thy only Son to death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption ; vouchsafe, through His infinite merits, to accept in our behalf the most holy sacrifice of the Mass, in the offering of which we are about to participate. We approach thy throne, O Lord, with humble but firm hope, when we remember that we have the price of the world's redemption to lay before thee. That price has been paid by the death of thy ever-blessed Son ; and among the wondrous means which He has provided for applying the fruits thereof to our souls, we contemplate with especial gratitude that enduring memorial of His love, which He instituted at His last supper ; whereby He enables us not only to possess within us, in the divine Communion, the very author of grace, the victim of propitiation, who died for us on the cross, but also to present Him anew to thy acceptance, really present on our altar, as our advocate and mediator, through the ministry of His priests, in the adorable sacrifice of the Mass.

At this adorable sacrifice we are now assembled to assist. O Lord, look upon the face of thy Christ ; and grant, that while we unite with thy holy Church and its minister, in offering Him before the throne of thy mercy, for all the purposes for which He once shed His most precious blood, we may be made partakers of the one all-atoning sacrifice which He consummated on Calvary.

Bowing down, therefore, in humble adoration before thy sovereign Majesty, we now offer the most holy sacrifice of the Mass to thy honor and glory, to acknowledge thy infinite perfections, thy supreme dominion over all thy creatures, our entire subjection to thee, and our total dependence on thy gracious providence.

We offer it to thee in thanksgiving for having created us to thine own

image, and destined us for eternal glory ; for having redeemed us from the slavery of Satan by the precious blood of thy divine Son ; for having called us to the true faith, assisted us by thy graces, borne with our ingratitude, watched over us by thy special providence, blessed us, notwithstanding our utter unworthiness, with the continuance of thy gracious protection ; and for all the other innumerable favors which we owe to thy undeserved bounty.

We offer it to move thee to compassion for our spiritual miseries, that thou mayest grant us the gift of compunction, and the pardon of our sins.

We offer it for the propagation of the Catholic faith, that all may be brought into the one fold, under the one shepherd ; for our most holy father the Pope, that the spirit of wisdom, and fortitude, and piety, may rest upon him ; for our prelate, and for all the pastors and clergy of thy holy Church, that they may direct the faithful in the way of salvation ; for the President, and for all who are in high station ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life ; for concord and good will among all states and people ; for the necessities of mankind ; for the inhabitants of this parish, particularly for the congregation here present ; and to obtain all the blessings that we stand in need of in this life, the happiness of heaven in the next, and eternal rest to the faithful departed.

And as Jesus Christ ordained, when He instituted at His last supper this wonderful mystery of His power, wisdom and goodness, we offer the Mass in grateful remembrance of all that He has done and suffered for the love of us, making special commemoration of His bitter passion and death, and of His glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven. Vouchsafe, O Almighty and eternal God, to whom alone the supreme worship of sacrifice is due, graciously to accept it, for these and all other purposes agreeable to thy holy will. We offer it, not confiding in any merits of our own—we offer it through the merits of the same Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, our high-priest and victim, and in the name of the most holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; to whom be honor, praise, and glory, for ever and ever.

O, all ye angels and saints, who stand before the throne of God, vouchsafe to join in our humble supplications ; and thou, above all, O ever-blessed Virgin, immaculate Mother of God our Saviour, assist us with thy prayers. We know that thou art near to that most loving Son, through whom only we can find access to the throne of grace, and who will refuse thee nothing, that through His infinite merits thou wilt deign to solicit for us. At thy suggestion He wrought the stupendous miracle of changing water into wine. Oh, then, beseech Him, by all that He has suffered for our salvation, that the still more wondrous prodigy which He is about to perform on our altar, may not, through our unworthiness,

be unprofitable to us; that He may move us to assist at it with the deepest awe, the firmest confidence, and the most ardent love; that it may thus ascend in the odor of sweetness to the throne of mercy in our behalf, to be to us an unfailing source of grace here, and a pledge of eternal life hereafter. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR HOLY MASS.

(BEFORE COMMUNION.)

Beg God's grace to communicate worthily.

Lord, I came into your sanctuary to seek the life and food of my soul. Am I innocent enough to appear before you, and to unite myself to you? O God, judge me, and be pleased to make your judgment known to me. The holy nation alone ought to receive you—those who are penetrated with a desire of pleasing you. Unjust men and sinners are unworthy to approach you: permit me not, O Lord, to be led away by them. Teach me, O Lord, to discern your adorable body, and to know the price of your precious blood. Why should my soul be seized with anguish and sadness at the sight of thy altars? Hope guides me, and love calls me to them. Enlighten me, O Lord; make the lustre of faith shine in my eyes. Never let me dishonor you by a profane and sacrilegious worship. Purify my heart: support my weakness. Send me from above that sublime wisdom which makes youth and the most inconsiderate years of our lives sensible to the dignity of your sacraments, the holiness of your laws, and the majesty of your presence. I hope in you, O Lord: you inspire me with that confidence which brings me to your holy mountain. Though I am frightened by my unworthiness, I am encouraged by your goodness. I shall receive into my breast a God who is afraid of losing me, and who wills my salvation. I will publish His praises. I will admire the prodigious effects of His divine charity.

O Almighty God, who gives the bread of heaven to us who live on the earth, give me all the fervor of those blessed souls who reign with you in your blessed abode. Amen.

AT THE CONFITEOR.

Humble yourself at the sight of your sins.

I have sinned, O Lord; I have violated your commandments. All that ought to have made me agreeable in your eyes has been employed in making me culpable. My thoughts, my words, my actions—all that is within me, and all that derives from me, I ought to direct to your glory. You gave me a being only to love and obey you: I have seldom submitted to the duties of obedience, and have been unfaithful to those of love,

I confess it, I own it, I acknowledge it to my shame and confusion. I will not seek to justify myself before you. It is through my fault, yes, through my own fault that I have sinned, I cannot too often repeat it, to pay homage to truth, and to confound my pride. Your inspirations, assistance and grace have never been wanting to me, but I have slighted them. You gave me an upright heart; you engraved on my soul principles of religion and justice, but I have misused them. My faults have been frequent, multiplied, and even very great, since they have been sufficiently so to displease you. O my God, shall I dare to present myself at the banquet of the elect, there to eat the food of angels?

Holy Virgin, who was the temple of the word made flesh; holy precursor, angel of the desert, who prepared Him the way; faithful disciples, who listened to Him with so much docility, and who received Him with such strong faith in this mysterious banquet; blessed souls, who now possess Him in heaven, and who partake without shade or darkness of all the treasures of His divinity, join me, and ask for me pardon and grace. You will speak to Him, and He will graciously hear you; His mercy itself will speak and appease His anger.

O my God, that I could but receive you into a heart as pure as that of your holy Mother; as penitent as that of your greatest prophet; as tractable as those of your disciples; as fervent as those of all the blessed whom you have crowned! I know that their affection and sentiments are beyond my weakness: but if I cannot possibly possess them, may I be allowed at least to desire them. Amen.

AT THE KYRIE ELEISON.

Beg for mercy.

Have mercy on me, Lord. Alas! if you observe all my iniquities, I cannot subsist before you: how, then, shall I be able to unite myself to you in so intimate a manner? Man, compared to you, is no more than a contemptible collection of errors, infirmities, and weakness—how, then, shall I dare to approach you? If you did not look on me with eyes of mercy, I should be annihilated by only one glance of your justice. But the happy days of indulgence and propitiation are not yet over for me; the days of wrath and vengeance are deferred; I can call upon your name, my Saviour and my Father; I am present here in your temple, where tokens of your goodness are discovered; before an altar where you are present only to distribute your graces. I will approach this throne of mercy with confidence, saying, "Lord, have mercy on me." I say with the same compunction as David, and as saith the blind man of Jericho, "Forget my sins, and dispel my darkness." This mysterious banquet was only prepared for the children of light; your goodness

calls me to it ; your mercy alone can make me worthy to be admitted. Amen.

AT THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS.

Give glory to God and beg His peace.

“Glory be to God on high ; and peace on earth to men of good will.” This canticle was sung by the angels at the manger in Bethlehem. Shall I not sing it again, Lord, now that you are hidden under the dark veils which cover you ? What a glory to see the all-powerful God, who is seated above the heavens ! What peace, what comfort on earth, to those of good will ! Glory be to God, whose justice is satisfied by the perpetual sacrifice of so noble a victim ! peace and comfort on earth to men of good will, who daily see a God, as it were, annihilate Himself to serve them, and feed them with His own substance. I praise you, O Lord, I bless you, I love you ; I am astonished, and ravished, and overjoyed, at so many miracles of generosity and love. Shall I draw no advantage from them ? Shall I let them be of no use, by the criminal dispositions of my heart ? Have I a mind to perish, notwithstanding all the sacrifices you offer to save me ? Shall I also slight that peace which you offer me ? Shall I not strive to acquire that good will which is the source of it ? O my God, calm that cruel war which rises so often in my heart, and makes the flesh fight against the spirit. Avert especially that criminal and seditious war which sinners denounce in fighting against you. Amen.

AT THE EPISTLE AND GOSPEL.

Beg that God will grant you His grace to practice the rules of conduct therein contained.

O my God, what would be the effect of barren affections, if I did not hear your divine word, which is declared to me by your prophets, apostles, and evangelists ? How ought I to be struck with astonishment at the threats, and softened by the promise they make me in your name, and which you yourself inspired ! The gospel is your work : all that is in it comes from your divine knowledge. Engrave in my heart these heavenly truths, which carry with them all the weight of your authority. Let this sacred flambeau light and guide my steps in the paths of justice, and say to me incessantly what Moses formerly said to the Jews : “That is what the Lord says ; that is what He commands you ; that is what He forbids.”

Oh, holy laws ! Oh, sublime and salutary maxims ! Alas ! I have a thousand times forgotten and shaken you off ; but the God of truth, in uniting Himself to me, will grant me the grace to comprehend, and strength to practice your holy precepts. Amen.

AT THE CREED.

Make an Act of Faith of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

I do not only believe, Lord, that you are existing in three distinct persons, who, notwithstanding their distinction, are only one indivisible substance; but I also believe you are here really present, to give yourself to me. I believe that you renew in this sacrament of your body and blood the same mysteries that I read in your gospel; I find in it again the mystery of your birth; in seeing you on the altar, as newly born and wrapped up in swaddling clothes, little known except by the heavenly spirits and the humble. The mystery of your hidden life, in seeing you forgotten and left; the mystery of your death, in seeing you sacrificed every day upon this altar, as you were upon the cross; the mystery of your interment, in seeing you buried in the tabernacle as in a tomb; the mystery of your resurrection, in seeing you feed men with your glorious flesh, which is freed forever from the empire of death. I will no longer envy the happiness of those who saw you during the course of your mortal life. I will neither experience the concern nor impatience of those kings and prophets who longed so much to see you. My faith discloses to me here all that the kings and prophets wished with so much eagerness to see.

AT THE OFFERTORY.

Offer yourself to God, and beg of Him to make you a perfect Christian.

Lord, what the priest offers you is as yet only a terrestrial substance; but by the virtue of your word it will soon become the body of Jesus Christ. O, all-powerful God, I offer you my heart. I offer you my soul—I put it into your hands; be pleased to change it, to transform it, and consecrate it. Say but one word and it will be sanctified; draw again therein your image that has been so often disfigured or defaced by sin; change its wicked inclinations into that happy bent which makes virtue loved. Destroy, annihilate this man of sin which is within me, with as great speed as you are going to destroy these substances, of which no more will remain than the sensible appearances. By the help of your grace, and my fidelity in corresponding to it, may I become suddenly a heavenly creature, and one worthy of possessing you on earth, and of reigning eternally with you in heaven.

AT THE LAVABO.

Beg of God the purity necessary to communicate worthily.

O pure and holy God, who heretofore said to one of your disciples, "If I do not wash you, you shall have no share with me," pour now upon

me the salutary effusions of your grace, which washes and purifies our souls. I am going to present myself at your sacred table; I shall partake of that bread of life which ought only to be received by the children of your kingdom. I shall receive that hidden manna which is only proffered to those who overcome the world and sin. Am I of the number of those who have vanquished it? Alas! it has conquered me, and I have been so unfortunate as to yield to its empire. Deface, then, O Lord, even to the least trace, these shameful defects it has left in my heart; let me not perish with the impious. If I have not walked in innocence deliver me from my iniquities.

AT THE PREFACE.

Join the Saints and Angels in their homage to Jesus Christ.

What do I hear? It is the voice of your minister, who bids me forget the earth, to raise my mind and heart to heaven. What is it that I there see, O great God? Angels who adore you, heavenly powers who prostrate themselves before you, pure souls who contemplate, love, and admire you, and whose delight it is to be with you. Alas, how sufficient to humble me is this sight! What! shall I receive into me this same God who reigns in heaven with so much glory? Ah, Lord, I am not even worthy to join my voice in the canticles of the saints. You have given me leave, O my God, and I will beg of them all to help my weak endeavors. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts! All heaven echoes with His praise, all the universe is filled with His glory; He is going to descend into me. He is going to unite Himself to me. I am not capable of honoring His greatness; and He vouchsafes to communicate to me all the plenitude of His divine nature.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CANON.

O my God, my prayers ought never to be more fervent, more extensive, nor more agreeable in your eyes than at this moment, that I am almost on the point of receiving the sovereign disposer of all graces. Propitious God, graciously hear my prayer. Bless the holy Church to which you have united me by the grace of baptism, and which now opens to me its treasures, in giving me the body and blood of its divine Spouse. Bless the Pope, bishops and priests; diffuse a spirit of zeal and sanctity on those whom you call to the sacred ministry; support in them a purity of faith, and make me always docile to their instructions. O my God, look down with the eyes of mercy upon this country; bless, direct and preserve our President, his cabinet, the members of Congress and all others in authority. Cast a favorable look on the faithful who assist with me at this holy sacrifice; support the weak, comfort the poor and afflicted, con-

vert sinners, give light to the blind, reclaim those that are hardened in sin I offer you, O Lord, my prayers for all, because I know you are the God of all, and that you will have us make but one body, and be animated by the same spirit.

AT THE ELEVATION.

Adore Jesus Christ really present in the Eucharist.

Here is my Saviour and my God! He is hidden, that He may not dazzle me with the brightness of His glory. Terrestrial substances are destroyed and replaced by the adorable flesh of my Saviour; of a God-man who is not to be seen. Some words have in an instant wrought these wonderful prodigies. Yes, it is the King of heaven; it is the King of the world, the Ruler of nations, who is now hidden under these appearances. Come, then, let us adore the Lord and fall down before Him. Let us bend our knees before the Lord that made us, for He is our God, and we are His people.

O sovereign Master of all nature, I adore you; and the more I think myself obliged to humble myself in your presence, the more I am moved at the favor you do me in giving me yourself, the more I am astonished at the honor I shall have in receiving you into my breast—Him before whom all knees bend in heaven, earth and hell. The heavens are open! the Holy of holies is come down upon the earth! An altar is now the throne where the Most High resides! The angels surround Him, and with the most lively sentiments of respect and love they make Him amends for the contempt, forgetfulness and indifference of men. What do you do, Lord, while those sublime intelligences prostrate themselves before you? You think of my salvation. You offer yourself to your Father as a victim for the redemption of sinners. O God! look upon your Christ. I can no ways appease and satisfy your justice, but I do not come alone to the throne of your grace; I offer you, with myself, your beloved Son. If you see nothing in me but the image of sin, you will find in Him the most pure and perfect sanctity. Look upon this spotless Lamb, stretched out as dead upon this altar; hear the voice of His precious blood; He sheds it on me to purify me, and it is through Him that I shall become worthy to unite myself to Him. It is after having offered Him to you as a victim that I shall have the confidence of receiving Him as my food.

AT THE PATER NOSTER.

Apply to Communion the Seven Petitions of the "Our Father."

O my Father, who reigns in heaven, come and reign in my soul. Come, sanctify it by your presence; come, subject it to your will, and make it pliant and docile to the inspiration of your grace. Feed it

this day with the mysterious bread which assuages its hunger and preserves its health and strength. Root out of my heart all sentiments of hatred and revenge : forgive me as I forgive others. Give me that wisdom which avoids temptations, and that strength which comes off victorious when they are inevitable : deliver me from all those evils which oppress me and give me so much uneasiness. I come to you as a son to his father, to be fed ; as a guilty servant to his master, to be reconciled ; as a subject to his king, to be protected ; as an afflicted person to his only resource, to be comforted.

AT THE AGNUS DEI.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world ; pure and spotless Victim, who alone can satisfy the justice of an offended God, vouchsafe to let me partake of the merits of your sacrifice, and of your innocence. What lessons do you give me of humility, patience, meekness and charity ! Imprint these truths in my soul, that it may be an agreeable abode for you, where you may be able to rest as in the residence of peace.

AT THE PRIEST'S COMMUNION.

Alas ! what am I to receive, my Lord and my God, my Spouse, my Judge, my Father, my Friend and my all ? Ought I not to be terrified at His grandeur, and humbled at my own unworthiness and baseness ? Inspire me, O Lord, with all the sentiments of humility, fervor and love that I ought to have in approaching so holy and tremendous a mystery. Say only the word of salvation to my soul ; since you are so good as to unite yourself to me, prepare me for the honor you design for me.

AT THE LAST GOSPEL.

O Word made flesh, how hidden and annihilated are you to give yourself to me ! You, who are the light and life of the world, enlighten me ; disclose to me your dignity and your charms. May all the sentiments of respect, admiration, gratitude and love, crowd into my mind, and penetrate it. To communicate is to receive a God. How ought I to be struck and moved at so holy and tremendous an action ! All who receive Him become the children of God. What an advantage ! What a happiness ! What a glory ! They are united to a God who is full of grace and truth ! O moving grace ! O divine truth ! August dignity of the children of God ! they become children of grace and truth ! What strength, what light, what exaltation in a sacrament which unites man to God ! I lose myself, Lord, I forget myself in the depth of your mysteries and in the immense ocean of your mercies. I will keep close to you by the bonds of love, which is the only sentiment that can correspond to your favor.

PIOUS REFLECTIONS AND ACTS BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION.

To reap a good advantage, and draw great fruit from this sacred banquet, we must not confine our preparation of thanksgiving to the morning or day of communion, but make it the constant occupation of our whole lives; so as to be taken up either in preparing ourselves for this heavenly food, or in returning thanks for having received it. Therefore, when preparing, let your aspiration during your work and occupations be,

FIRST.

Of supplication to our Lady, for grace to receive worthily.

O Mother of Mercy, refuge of sinners, obtain for me purity, contrition, humility, etc.

The like to your good angel, special patrons, and patronesses, for example:

O my good angel, it is your Lord, as well as mine, that I am going to receive; help me to receive Him worthily, etc.

SECOND.

Of desire, ardently wishing that you had all possible fervor to receive Jesus Christ.

O my God, I have nothing good in myself, but I desire now more than ever to receive you worthily; to have more faith, more hope, etc.

THIRD.

Of humility, frequently acknowledging your unworthiness.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, on account of my great and innumerable sins; not worthy on account of the little service I render you, of the little love I bear you, etc. Speak only one word, and my soul shall be healed. You can, dear Jesus, with one word, supply everything that is wanting in me. Do it, then, dearest Saviour.

On the day of Communion, place yourself in the presence of God; invoke the intercession of our blessed Lady, and all the saints and angels; imagining that perhaps this may be the last Communion you will ever make; and were you sure it would be so, with what devotion and recollection would you not perform it? Then make your intention; after which prepare, by acts of faith, hope, and charity, etc.

FAITH.

My God, I firmly believe all the truths the holy Catholic Church believes and teaches; and, in particular, that what I am going to receive is the true body, blood, soul and divinity of my Lord Jesus Christ, under the form of bread, whole, entire and glorious, as He is in heaven; the same that was born of the Virgin Mary, and that suffered under Pontius Pilate, that was crucified, etc. I believe it, and am convinced of it more

than if I saw it with my very eyes, because you have revealed it, who are all truth; and in this faith I will live and die, with your holy grace.

We can do nothing better than repeat, enlarge, and enliven such acts before Communion; for in proportion as our faith increases, our devotion must also increase.

HOPE.

What may I not hope for by receiving you, my merciful, my bountiful Saviour? With one touch, or one word, you gave hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, strength to the lame, and even life to the dead; therefore you may now, my dearest Jesus, as easily give me whatsoever I want for soul or body; you come for no other end but to do me good, and fill me with your blessing. Come then, sweet Jesus, come and help this miserable soul of mine; see what poverty there is here; there is nothing in me fit for your reception; adorn, yourself, the habitation you are pleased to come into; give me your love, give me, etc.

LOVE AND DESIRE.

As the hart pants after the fountains of water, so my soul pants after you, my loving Jesus. I most ardently long and desire to receive you, not only that I may be freed from all my miseries, but chiefly that I may have the happiness of embracing you, and of being united to you. Come then, dear Saviour, and take possession of my heart, etc.

HUMILITY AND CONTRITION.

But how can I dare to come near you, who are the great God of heaven and earth, being what I am? Though I were an angel, I should not be worthy to appear before you: how unworthy, then, I must be to receive you into my breast, being so wretched a worm! and, what is much worse, such an ungrateful sinner, that has so often crucified you! Ah, Lord, I am not worthy, but what can I do for my sins, but humbly confess them, and heartily repent of them? This is what I do, by your grace, to the best of my power, and wish to do it infinitely better. Ah, my loving God, I am heartily sorry above all things for my sins, not so much for the punishment I have incurred by them, as for having offended and abused so good a God as you are, whom I love with my whole heart and soul, and would not offend once again for millions of worlds. Oh, strike me dead, my God, rather than permit me to be so ungrateful to you for the future.

When near Communion, raise in yourself a great devotion. Imagine you see all heaven paying their homage to their sovereign King, and that you are surrounded by the angels, who adore Him with the most profound respect.

At the Confiteor, renew your sorrow for your sins. When the priest gives absolution, receive it with an humble confidence and gratitude. When you hear "Behold the Lamb of God," etc., enliven your faith of the real presence. When you hear "Lord, I am not worthy," etc., humble yourself in a most profound manner, saying the same over and over till you receive.

When the priest says "Corpus Domini," etc. (May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul to life everlasting. Amen), burn with an ardent desire that Jesus may take entire possession of your heart, soul, and all your affections; and that He may deliver you from the tyranny of your enemies, and so unite you to Himself that nothing may ever more separate you from Him; to which effect you may say as follows:

Come, dear Jesus, come and receive me; come and take possession of my soul and body; of my will, memory, and understanding; of my thoughts, words, and actions; of every look, step, breath and motion; in fine, of all that I am and have. Come and deliver me from all my spiritual enemies. Come, dear Jesus, and unite me strictly to you. I do now, my dearest Jesus, receive you in the best manner I can into this my poor heart: do you one day receive me into your heavenly habitation.

Aspirations for Spiritual Communion.

O divine Jesus, present on our altars, I adore, love, and desire you with all my heart. Come into my heart, and dwell in it, and never leave it.

You will give me, O Lord, to find you alone, that I may open my whole heart to you, and enjoy you as my soul desireth; and that you may speak to me and I to you as the Beloved is accustomed to speak to His beloved, and a friend to entertain himself with his friend.

This I pray for, this I desire—that I may be wholly united to you, and withdraw my heart from all created things, and learn to relish heavenly and eternal things.

Ah, Lord God, when shall I be wholly united to you, and so absorbed in you as to be altogether forgetful of myself? you in me, and I in you, and so grant us both to continue in one.

Then all that is within me shall rejoice exceedingly, when my soul shall be perfectly united to my God.

Then will my Beloved say to me, If you will be with me, I will be with you. And I will answer Him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will willingly remain with you. This is my only desire, that my heart may be united to you.

My very soul and body are languishing of love for you, my heart is longing to be united to you. Give yourself to me, and it is enough, for, except you, nothing is sufficient to console me.

Without you I cannot subsist, and without your visit I am not able to live.

Heart of Jesus, burning for love of me,
Inflame my sinful heart for love of thee !

O sweetest heart of Jesus, I implore,
That I may ever love thee more and more.

May I die, my Beloved, for love of thee,
Who vouchsafedst to die for love of me.

What is there in heaven above, or on earth below, for which my soul could languish, save you, the God of my heart, and my portion forever ? Lord, you are the portion of my inheritance, and chalice ; it is you that will restore my inheritance to me.

You are my God ; preserve me, since I have hoped in you. I will love my Lord Jesus Christ.

I will hold Him, and never let Him go. I will die with Him, and burn in the flames of His love : the same fire shall consume the Creator and His miserable creature.

My Jesus is mine, and I am His ; I will live and die in His bosom ; neither life nor death shall be able to separate me from Him.

Invocation of the merits of Jesus Christ.

Most holy soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Most ardent soul of Christ, inflame me.

Most sacred body of Christ, redeem me.

Most precious blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Most pure water, gushing from Christ's side, cleanse me.

Most powerful sweat of Christ, heal me.

Most pious passion of Christ, comfort me.

O Good Jesus, guard me.

Within your wounds hide me.

Never allow me to be separated from you.

From the wicked one protect me.

At the hour of death invite me.

Order me to come to you.

That with the angels and archangels I may praise you forever and ever. Amen.

Invocation of the Life of Christ.

O Jesus, living in Mary, come and live in your servant, in the spirit of your sanctity, in the plenitude of your power, in the exercise of all your virtues, in the perfection of all your ways, in the communion of your divine mysteries ; overrule all adverse powers, in the strength of your Holy Spirit, and to the glory of the Father. Amen.

584279

A Prayer after Communion.

To be said before an image of the crucifix; for which Pope Pius VII., by the decree, *URBIS* and *ORBIS*, April 10, 1821, granted a plenary indulgence to all the faithful; applicable to the souls in purgatory.

O good and sweetest Jesus, behold, I cast myself on my knees before you, and in the utmost ardor of my soul beg and beseech you to imprint on my heart lively feelings of faith, hope, and charity; a sincere sorrow for my past transgressions, and a firm resolution of atoning for them; while with great affection and grief of heart, I consider with myself, and contemplate in mind your five wounds, having before my eyes that saying of yours, by the prophet David, "They pierced my hands and feet; they counted all my bones."

An entire Oblation of ourselves to God.

O most merciful Creator, I offer you myself, with all my thoughts, words, and works of the day, and of my life, in union of those of my Saviour, and of His infinite merits.

I resolve, with the assistance of your divine grace, to avoid sin above all things, particularly the sin to which I am most addicted. I humbly implore this great grace of you, through the death and passion of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the intercession of His ever-immaculate Mother.

Receive, O Lord, my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my will. All that I have and am I owe you; I now return it, and commit myself to the disposal of your divine will. Give me your love and grace, and I am rich enough; I desire nothing more. Amen.

Consecration to the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary.

O adorable heart of my Jesus, mysterious sanctuary and repose of the delights of the Father and the Spirit of love! O the most amiable and generous of hearts! O heart, wounded with love for your unworthy creatures! hide within your sacred wounds your child, devoted to you forever.

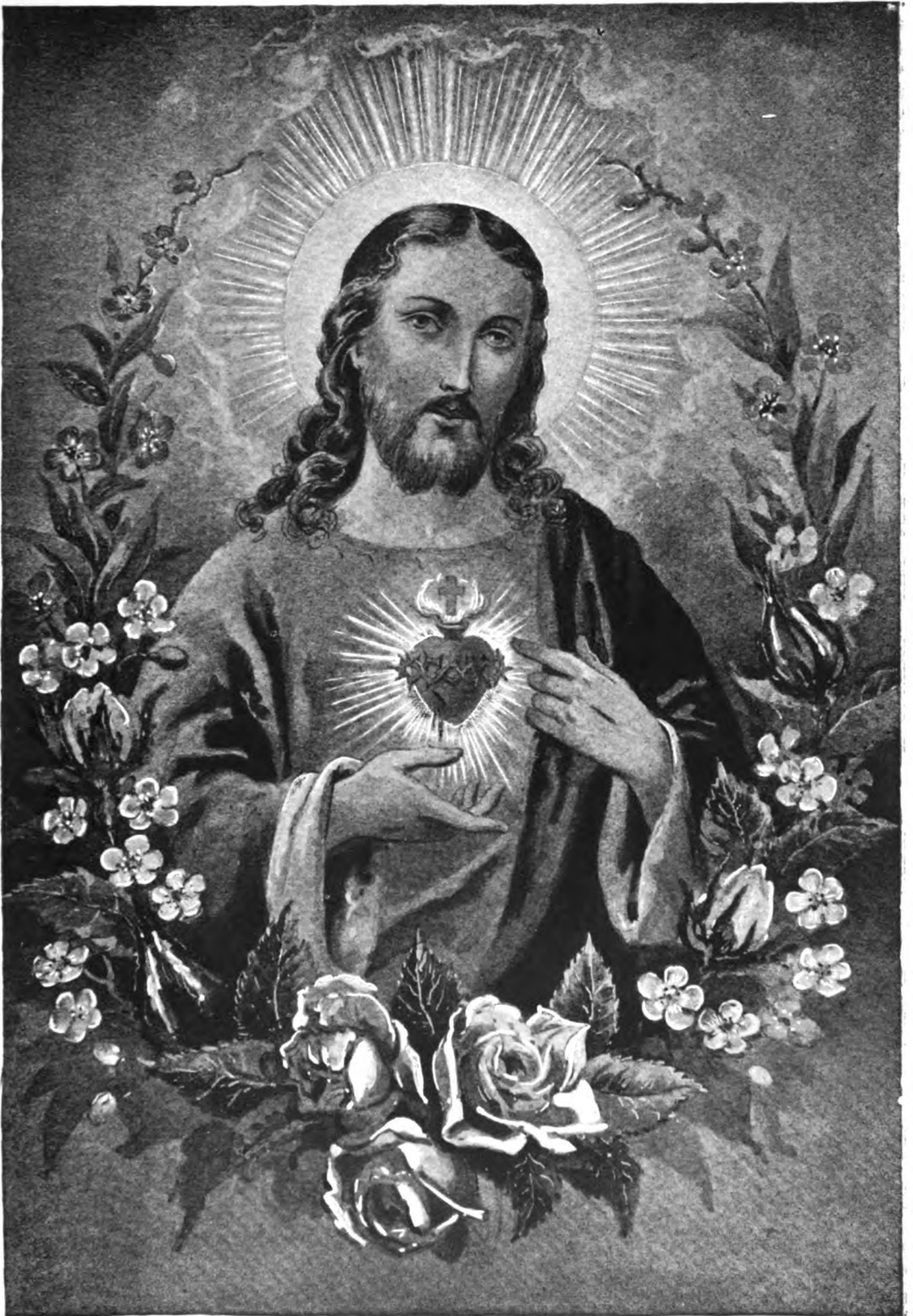
Alas! if hitherto I have been so perfidious and ungrateful as to wound you by my crimes, and to live without loving you as you deserved, pardon me, O tenderest of fathers, pardon an unworthy child, who now lies prostrate with confusion at your feet. O heart of Jesus, furnace of love, teach me to love you; burn and consume all the ties that keep me far from you.

And you, O Mary my Mother, whose immaculate heart was stamped on the heart of Jesus; to whom it was given to live and die of love; whose love for me was imbibed in the heart of Jesus; O my dear Mother, Mother of sorrow and love! you brought me forth in affliction on Cal-

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THE SACRED HEART OF MARY.



THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

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vary, at the feet of Jesus, expiring on the cross ; will you refuse to present me to your amiable Son ? I throw myself into your blessed arms, and give you my heart to present it to Jesus.

O Jesus ! O Mary ! It is at the foot of your altar, where the seraphs tremble and adore, that I consecrate myself forever, and without reserve, to your sacred hearts, to be with you one victim of love. Yes, I have sworn and decreed not to live but for your love and to make you beloved, and to die rather than offend you. I will show myself the generous child of the most generous of Saviours and of mothers, and rival the generosity of the angels, if possible. And as you have not called me to your service, O amiable hearts of Jesus and Mary, but in order to form me according to yourselves, under the shadow of your wings, may I be able to inflame the hearts of all by the fire of your divine love, or at least to make up, by the extent of my love, for the little love of others. And at the end, may I expire sweetly in your arms, to consummate the union of my heart with your sacred hearts, in the delights of eternity. Amen.

Consecration to the Heart of Mary.

O purest of Virgins ! O Mother of my God ! though unworthy to appear before you, yet confiding in your clemency I am now come to throw myself at your feet, O refuge of sinners. I offer you my heart, to triumph over it in your mercy ; accept it through the hands of my good angel ; I consecrate it forever to the love and service of your most amiable heart, to be sanctified by you in the union of divine love. And, to render it the more acceptable, I offer you with it all the homage I am able ; refuse not my poor but sincere offering ; may it be irrevocable. O Jesus and Mary, you are the sole object of my love in life and death, my portion for time and eternity ; inspire me with a holy fear, a lively faith, a firm hope, an ardent love for God, now and forever. Amen.

A concluding prayer.

I beg pardon, O my God, for my distractions, my tepidity, and all my other faults ; I leave you my heart, to thank you for your favors ; replenish it with your love and grace. Before I go, give me your holy benediction, for the present time, and for my entire life, that I may no longer live but for you. Amen.

A prayer against the Cholera, or other Sickness.

It was revealed to a venerable priest at Rome that whoever should repeat this prayer, with devotion, would escapè the cholera.

O Jesus, divine Redeemer, be merciful to us, and the entire world. Amen.

O mighty God ! O Holy God ! O immortal God ! have pity on us, and the entire world. Amen.

Grant us pardon and mercy, O my Jesus ; and during these days of present danger pour down your most precious blood upon us. Amen.

O eternal Father, have mercy on us, through the sacred blood of Jesus Christ, your only Son ; have mercy on us, we beseech you. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Remarks on the following Litanies.

“ You will drink with joy at the fountains of the Saviour.” (Isaias xii. 3.)

“ A good man, out of the good treasures of his heart, brings forth good things.” (Luke vi. 45.)

Who is there so blind to self-interest as to neglect to quench his thirst, after passing the parched desert of this life, at the source and fountain of so much joy and spiritual consolation ? The heart of Jesus is an inexhaustible treasure of every grace and mercy that banished man needs in his present forlorn state. In the sacred heart of Jesus the image of his Creator will find a tender father, an affectionate brother, a sincere friend. “ I will speak to His heart,” says St. Bonaventure, “ and obtain whatever I desire.” The devout client of this ocean of bounty will find in the following litanies a feeling appeal to the affectionate heart of Jesus, in every stage of His mortal and glorified life, and an infallible redress of all his wants in every state of a spiritual life. Let man approach the sublime heart of Jesus, and God will be exalted and praised for ever. Amen. (Ps. lxii. 7.)

LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Ghost,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Heart of Jesus,

Heart of Jesus, formed in the womb of thy virgin Mother,

Heart of Jesus, hypostatically united to the Eternal Word,

Heart of Jesus, sanctuary of the Divinity,

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the most holy Trinity,

Heart of Jesus, temple of sanctity,

Heart of Jesus, fountain of all grace,

Heart of Jesus, full of meekness and humility,

Have mercy on us.

Heart of Jesus, furnace of love,
 Heart of Jesus, source of contrition,
 Heart of Jesus, treasure of wisdom,
 Heart of Jesus, ocean of bounty,
 Heart of Jesus, throne of mercy,
 Heart of Jesus, model of all virtues,
 Heart of Jesus, house of God, and gate of heaven,
 Heart of Jesus, inexhaustible treasure,
 Heart of Jesus, of whose plentitude we have all received,
 Heart of Jesus, rich and generous to all who invoke you,
 Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,
 Heart of Jesus, living victim, holy and pleasing God,
 Heart of Jesus, victim of propitiation for our sins,
 Heart of Jesus, fountain of living water, flowing to eternal life,
 Heart of Jesus, sorrowful in the garden,
 Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with sweat and languor,
 Heart of Jesus, glutted with reproaches,
 Heart of Jesus, grieved and sorrowful for our sins,
 Heart of Jesus, obedient to the death of the cross,
 Heart of Jesus, pierced through with a lance,
 Heart of Jesus, exhausted of blood on the cross,
 Heart of Jesus, refuge of sinners,
 Heart of Jesus, strength of the just,
 Heart of Jesus, consolation of the afflicted,
 Heart of Jesus, support of the tempted,
 Heart of Jesus, terror of devils,
 Heart of Jesus, perseverance of the good,
 Heart of Jesus, hope of the dying,
 Heart of Jesus, joy of the blessed,
 Heart of Jesus, felicity of all saints,
 Heart of Jesus, king and centre of all hearts,

Have mercy on us.

From all sin, heart of Jesus, deliver us.

From hardness of heart, heart of Jesus, deliver us.

From eternal death, heart of Jesus, deliver us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us. O Lord
 Jesus.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Jesus, hear us.

Jesus, graciously hear us.

V. Jesus, meek and humble of heart.

R. Make our hearts conformable to yours.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who drawest from thy sacred heart ineffable treasures, whereby thou enrichest the hearts of men, mercifully grant us so perfectly to participate in the virtues and affections of thy adorable heart, that we may be able to make it a suitable return of love, and repair by worthy homage the insults it receives in the sacrament of love; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord Jesus, graciously hear us.

God the Father, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, inflame our hearts with the love of Jesus,
with which you so ardently burn.

Heart of Mary, full of grace,

Heart of Mary, blessed among hearts,

Heart of Mary, the delight of the Father,

Heart of Mary, the object of the tenderest complacency of the Son,

Heart of Mary, the delightful abode of the Holy Ghost,

Heart of Mary, sanctuary of the most holy Trinity,

Heart of Mary, enricher of the three divine persons with all the
gifts of heaven,

Heart of Mary, mirror of divine perfections,

Heart of Mary, throne of mercy,

Heart of Mary, furnace of love divine,

Heart of Mary, centre of beautiful dilection,

Heart of Mary, treasure of sanctity,

Heart of Mary, most like the heart of Jesus,

Heart of Mary, the most meek and humble of hearts,

Heart of Mary, the most conformable to the divine will,

Heart of Mary, model of all virtues,

Heart of Mary, pierced with a sword of grief,

Heart of Mary, the first that was consecrated by a vow of vir-
ginity,

Inflame our hearts with the love of Jesus, etc.

Heart of Mary, that supplied the adorable blood that redeemed
the world,
Heart of Mary, merciful in obtaining for sinners the grace of their
conversion and salvation,
Heart of Mary, sacred treasury of the words of Jesus,
Heart of Mary, the most noble, the most holy, the most generous
of hearts,
Heart of Mary, worthy the love of heaven and earth,
Heart of Mary, our refuge, our succor, our consolation,
Heart of Mary, the sweet hope of all who venerate you,
V. Immaculate Mary, by the meekness and humility of your heart,
R. Render our hearts like unto the sacred heart of Jesus.

Inflame our hearts, etc.

Let us Pray.

God of infinite power and clemency, who, for the salvation of sinners and the consolation of the miserable, did render the heart of Mary like unto the heart of her Son, Jesus, in meekness and mercy; grant to all those who honor her sacred heart the grace to become men according to the heart of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Ghost, in the unity of God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LITANY OF ST. CATHERINE OF SIENNA.

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
St. Catherine of Sienna,
Chaste spouse of Christ,
Fervent lover of God,
Faithful follower of the cross,
Contemplative soul,
Instructed by the Holy Ghost,
Enemy of vanity,
Vanquisher of the Evil One,
Pattern of docility and obedience,
Humble Catherine,

Pray for us.

Immaculate Catherine,
 Model of religious,
 Rigidly austere,
 Most devout to the holy sacrament,
 Entirely devoted to the sacred heart,
 Heroically meek and patient,
 Pattern of charity,
 Powerful in converting souls,
 Mediatrix for sinners,
 Angel of peace,
 Zealot of the glory of the Most High,
 Guide of interior souls,
 Replenished with celestial knowledge,
 Fill with divine gifts,
 Elevated to the throne of the Divinity,
 Following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth,
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, hear us, O Lord.
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on
 us, O Lord.

Pray for us.

V. The zeal of thy love has eaten me up.

R. The offences of those who offended have fallen upon me.

Pray for us, blessed St. Catherine of Sienna.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that we who honor St. Catherine the Virgin, may, through her intercession, profit by the example of her eminent virtues : who liveth and reigneth, world without end. Amen.

[Say, morning, noon and night, one "Hail Mary," and the following, to obtain purity, angelical purity of body, mind and heart, commending at the same time, your powers and senses to the Mother of purity.]

By your sacred virginity and immaculate conception, O most chaste Virgin Mary, purify my body and soul. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Ever live Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

LITANY OF ST. BRIDGET, PATRONESS OF IRELAND.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.
 Christ, graciously hear us.
 Eternal Father, have mercy on us.
 Divine Son, have mercy on us.
 Most Sacred Trinity, have mercy on us.
 Holy Virgin of virgins,
 Blessed St. Bridget,
 Little plant of our great apostle,
 Consecrated spouse of the Kings of kings,
 Corner-stone of the monastic institute in the island of saints,
 Bridget, gem of our emerald isle,
 Model of Irish virgins.
 Mother of religious,
 Pattern of holiness,
 Intercession for the Irish clergy,
 Mediatrix for the Irish people,
 Protectress of the holy faith preached by St. Patrick,
 Enjoying with him the clear vision of God,
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
 Pray for us, holy St. Bridget.
 That we may sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Pray for us.

Let us pray.

O God, the author of all sanctity, grant that we, who inhabit the island of saints, may, through the intercession of St. Bridget, walk in their footsteps here on earth, and arrive with them to the possession of thee in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A CANTICLE AFTER COMMUNION.

The happiness I now enjoy,
 With Jesus in my heart,
 The enemy can ne'er destroy,
 With all his wily art.

The bliss that Jesus now imparts
 To my enraptured soul,
 Is only felt by faithful hearts
 That sin cannot control.

I feel my ardor now revive,
 With Jesus in my heart ;
 In vain this world's allurements strive
 My Lord and I to part.

THE GLORIES OF JESUS.

From all such horrors now I flee,
 With Jesus for my guide,
 Who condescends to visit me,
 And in my heart abide.

Can I e'er feel deceitful joy,
 With Jesus for my rule,
 Possessed of him could aught annoy,
 Or make my ardor cool?

What precious treasures I obtain,
 When Jesus I receive,
 The highest favors then I gain,
 For which I worlds would leave.

To grief and trouble I'll be resigned
 Since Jesus I possess,
 His painful crosses were designed
 My sorrows to redress. Amen. Amen.

LITANY FOR A HAPPY DEATH.

When the dark hour of death in its terrors draws nigh,
 And I'm summoned to quit earth's diversions and glee,
 When I take leave of all with a long farewell sigh,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When the cold cloud of death has o'ershadowed my brow,
 When the friends that I love I no longer shall see,
 When under the pressure of illness I bow,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When dark, gloomy phantoms my soul shall infest,
 And endeavor to make it distrustful to thee,
 When in body and mind I'm a stranger to rest,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When the few that have ardently loved me below
 Shall weep, and, imploring forgiveness from thee,
 Shall humbly beseech thee some pity to show,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When the last tear of death shall bedew my pale cheek,
 When the sense of all objects forever shall flee,
 When one glimpse of comfort in vain I shall seek,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When at length I shall quit this sad valley of tears,
 And my soul from the bondage of life shall be free,
 When heaven in all its true lustre appears,
 Then, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

Oh, exile me not from the mansions of joy,
 Where the light of thy glory unveiled I shall see.
 But receive me where love is the only employ,
 And, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

Let us Pray.

O God, who hast doomed all men to die, but hast concealed from all the hour of their death, grant that I may pass my days in the practice of holiness and justice, and that I may deserve to quit this world in the peace of a good conscience, and in the embraces of your love, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN TO OUR SAVIOUR JESUS.

(From St. Bernard, tom. 11.)

JESUS, the only thought of thee
 With sweetness fills my breast ;
 But sweeter far it is to see,
 And on thy beauty feast.

No sound, no harmony so gay,
 Can art or music frame ;
 No thought can reach, no words can say
 The sweets of thy blest name.

Jesus, our hope, when we repent,
 Sweet source of all our grace :
 Sole comfort of our banishment ;
 O ! what, when face to face ?

Jesus !—that name inspires my mind
 With springs of life and light ;
 More than I ask in thee I find,
 And lavish in delight.

No art or eloquence of man
 Can tell the joys of love ;
 Only the saints can understand
 What they in Jesus prove.

Thee, then, I'll seek, retired apart,
 From world and business free ;
 When these shall knock I'll shut my heart,
 And keep it all for thee.

Before the morning light I'll come,
 With Magdalen, to find,
 In sighs and tears, my Jesus' tomb,
 And there refresh my mind.

THE GLORIES OF JESUS.

My tears upon His grave shall flow,
My sighs the garden fill ;
Then at His feet myself I'll throw,
And there I'll seek His will.

Jesus, in thy bless'd steps I'll tread,
And walk in all thy ways ;
I'll never cease to weep and plead,
Till I'm restor'd to grace.

O King of love, thy blessed fire
Doth such sweet flames excite,
That first it raises the desire,
Then fills it with delight.

Thy lovely presence shines so clear
Through every sense and way,
That souls which once have seen thee near,
See all things else decay.

Come, then, dear Lord, possess my heart ;
Chase thence the shades of night ;
Come, pierce it with thy flaming dart,
And ever-shining light.

Then I'll for ever Jesus sing,
And with the saints rejoice ;
And both my heart and tongue shall bring
Their tribute to my dearest King,
In never-ending joys. Amen.

“ Live, Jesus ! live, and let it be
My life to die for love of thee.”

FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

COME ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

This day is exhibited a mystery of love ; this day the angels are astonished ; this day unhappy man is redeemed from the tyranny of hell.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day the law and the prophets are fulfilled—to-day the “ desire of the everlasting hills ” has come down—to-day the heavens are broken through, and the “ Expectation of Nations ” has descended.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day the heavens have dropped down dew, and the clouds have rained the Just—to-day the earth has opened and budded forth a Saviour.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day the iniquity of the earth is destroyed—to-day the Saviour of the world reigns over His people.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day true peace has descended from heaven—to-day the entire extent of the heavens is overflowing with honey.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day is the brilliant day of new redemption—the day of ancient reparation—the day of eternal bliss.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day the fountain of riches is covered with rags—to-day Omnipotence assumes the form of an helpless infant—to-day the Creator of heaven and earth cannot find a resting-place among men.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day He comes into the world that was made by Him, and it knows Him not—to-day He comes into His own, and they receive Him not.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

To-day Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is born of the Virgin Mary, in the stable of Bethlehem.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

He has come from His royal throne, while all things were in deep silence, and the night in the midst of its course.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

His advent is announced by a heavenly army—His praise is hymned by an angelic choir.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

The lowly of the earth are invited to His birth—the shepherds of Bethlehem are summoned to the joyful scene.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

“Let us pass over to Bethlehem ” with them, and enter the humble cave ; let us explore the mysteries of this sanctified grot.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Let us satiate our eyes with the sight of the lovely Babe, let us admire in secret the poverty by which He is surrounded.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Let us sing “Great is the Lord and worthy of praise ;” little is the Lord and exceedingly worthy of love.

Come ! let us adore the babe of Bethlehem.

Behold the little Babe wrapped up in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger ; behold the wretchedness by which He is surrounded.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Behold His innocent flesh exposed to the rigors of cold ; behold His limbs shivering while the smile of heaven is playing upon His beautiful lips.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Behold the little hands which formed the universe, and which are one day to be cruelly pierced, now stretched out in supplication to Heaven for our sins.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Behold the little feet that are to walk about doing good, and that are to be finally lacerated with the cruel nail and hammer.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Behold the countenance on which the angels desire to look, now upturned to Heaven in silent treaty for our transgressions.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See those beauteous eyes, resplendent with light from above, now suffused with tears of sorrow for our crimes, now radiant with the light of redeeming us.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See the pulsations of that little heart which pants for our happiness; and remember, that for love of us it is to be pierced with the cruel lance.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Think that under all these humble forms infinite majesty, almighty power, immaculate sanctity, and eternal wisdom are veiled.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See His Virgin Mother bending over the lovely Babe, and contemplating with chaste eyes all the fullness of the Godhead.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See how she laments the poverty and misery that surround Him, and yet bows in submission to the decrees of heaven—how she adores Him with profoundest homage as her Lord and her God, and welcomes Him with joy as the deliverer of her fellow-creatures.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See with what delight she stretches Him forth for the adoration of the shepherds, and how she treasures up in her heart the mysteries which she beholds.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See the joy of the humble carpenter, His reputed father—how he is ravished with amazement—how he kisses off the precious tear-drops from the infant's eye—how he reverently composes His little limbs, and then retires to a short distance to survey and adore Him in silent wonder.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

See the shepherds of Israel prostrated before Him, and welcoming to earth their expected Messiah.

Come ! let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem.

Let us join them and Joseph, and the angels, and the Virgin.

Let us sing Glory to God, and peace to men.

Let us throw ourselves at the feet of the infant, and say—

O sweet, adorable, and lovely little Babe of Bethlehem,
 We kiss thee!
 We salute thee!
 We adore thee!
 We love thee!
 We thank thee!
 We praise thee!
 We bless thee!
 We glorify thee!
 We detest our sins!
 We bewail our crimes!
 We weep for our ingratitude!
 We promise to amend!
 We are grieved for thy sufferings!
 We mourn for thy humiliation!

O come! let us adore the little Babe of Bethlehem,
 The Jesus!
 The Saviour!
 The Redeemer!
 The Creator! and the Judge of the world!

THE STABAT MATER.

CLOSE by the ever-hallow'd cross that bore
 The bleeding Son, the afflicted Mother stood,
 While pangs on pangs her tender bosom tore,
 And grief pour'd forth an agonizing flood.
 No pause, no respite, her affliction knew.
 For her, fell anguish edg'd its keenest dart.
 She groan'd, she sigh'd; at every breath He drew,
 The sword of sorrow pierced her to the heart.

Alas! alas! what deep, what poignant grief
 Felt the fond Mother of her only born,
 In that sad hour, when sunk, beyond relief,
 She view'd the sufferings of her Son forlorn!
 Her trembling frame with fear and horror shook;
 At every wound she writh'd with deadly pain,
 Her piteous eye express'd in every look
 Her woes too big for nature to sustain.

Ah! say, what mortal could unmov'd behold
 Christ's sweetest Mother thus with grief oppress?
 Who would not weep to see the tears that roll'd
 Amid the storm that heav'd her sacred breast?
 Who could the burst of pious grief restrain,
 To view her tender, sympathizing eye
 Speak all the anguish of His bitter pain,
 And hear her answer to each groan and sigh?

THE GLORIES OF JESUS.

In expiation of our guilty race,
 Her Son she saw with cruel wounds assail'd;
 She saw Him scourg'd, while blood ran down apace;
 Through hands and feet she saw sweet Jesus nail'd.
 She heard Him breathe His last sad parting sigh,
 A sound that harrow'd up her soul anew,
 She saw Him close His godlike, beaming eye,
 And saw the spear send forth the heav'nly dew.

Fond Mother, thou whose love was love indeed,
 Oh, give me, by one sweet, resistless pray'r,
 Whilst meditation sees thy Jesus bleed,
 In thy vast agony of grief to share!
 Give me, in loving Christ, my God, my all,
 To feed the ever-glowing sacred flame!
 And while unwearied at His shrine I fall,
 To make His love my sole, my glorious aim!

O holiest Mother of my God, fix deep
 Within my breast the cruel wounds He bore;
 Oh, let my soul the sacred furrows keep
 And sink them deeply ever more and more!
 Let thy sweet Son my every thought possess;
 His wounds be ever present to my sight!
 Oh, let me make His cruel burthen less,
 Whilst suffering with Him is my sole delight!

To weep true tears of anguish from my soul,
 Such as thy sorrow once was seen to pour;
 And with my crucified dear Lord condole,
 Is the sole grace my vows and sighs implore!
 Yes, this sole favor let thy bounty give—
 Close by the cross with thee to take my stand
 And feel new sorrow every day I live,
 Whilst contemplation treads the sacred land!

O Virgin, high above all virgins crown'd,
 Spurn not the suppliant that now breathes a pray'r,
 Give me to shed my tears in every wound,
 And all His pangs with thee in thought to bear!
 Day after day, each night, each silent hour,
 Christ's death be still my mind's eternal food!
 Let grief still pour the unexhausted shower,
 Fed with His wounds, His sighs, His groans, His blood!

Oh, could I feel sore wounded with His wounds!
 Oh, could His cross inebriate my soul!
 By that sweet love for Him that knows no bounds,
 And those fond thoughts that in my bosom roll!
 With love of Him let my rapt senses glow;
 Let the sweet flame dissolve, consume my heart!

And when I hear the last loud trumpet blow,
To him who lov'd thy Son thy aid impart!

Oh, be my guard the shadow of thy cross;
Christ's death be my strong bulwark and defence.
Let not my soul e'er know the deadly loss
Of grace procured me at His blood's expense!
And oh! when death o'ercasts its mournful gloom,
Extinguishing this body's vital heat,
In the bright regions of eternal bloom
May my glad soul its great Redeemer meet! Amen.

JESUS.

JESUS my Saviour, my God, my friend,
In life and in death my soul defend,
In joy and sorrow, in good and ill,
Be thou my hope and protector still.

My joy, thy glory; my hope, thy name;
Amiable Jesus, my heart inflame;
In virtue's ways all my steps direct,
Powerful Jesus, my soul protect.

To thee I fly as to sure repose,
Conquering Jesus, subdue my foes;
When in affliction and grief I bend,
Comfortless Jesus, be thou my friend.

Let not thy torments and sighs be vain,
Suffering Jesus, my hope sustain;
Thou, too, didst weep in thy mortal years,
Sorrowing Jesus, accept my tears.

Grant I may walk in thy footsteps bright;
Glorious Jesus, be thou my light;
Grant I may never desert thy side;
Crucified Jesus, be thou my guide.

When my race is run, and I reach the goal,
Merciful Jesus, accept my soul;
Freed from this valley of tears and woe,
Bountiful Jesus, my crown bestow.

Thus guarded in life and in death may I be,
And Jesus be ever a Jesus to me.



Stations of the Cross.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS (*Via Crucis, Via Calvarii*). A series of fourteen crosses, generally with images or pictures representing different events in the Passion of Christ, each Station corresponding to a particular event. They are ranged round the church, the first station being placed on one side of the high altar, the last on the other. The Stations are among the most popular of Catholic devotions, and are to be found in almost every church. Sometimes they are erected in the open air, especially on roads which lead to some church or shrine standing on a hill.

The devotion began in the Franciscan order. The Franciscans are the guardians of the holy places in Jerusalem, and these stations are intended as a help to making in spirit a pilgrimage to the scene of Christ's sufferings and death. Innocent XII., in 1694, authentically interpreting a brief of his predecessor, Innocent XI., in 1686, declared that the indulgences granted for devoutly visiting certain holy places in Palestine could be gained by all Franciscans, and by all affiliated to the order, if they made the way of the cross devoutly—*i. e.*, passed or turned from station to station meditating devoutly on the various stages of the history.

Benedict XIII., in 1726, extended these indulgences to all the faithful; Clement XII., in 1731, permitted persons to gain the indulgences at stations erected in churches which were not Franciscan, provided they were erected by a Franciscan with the sanction of the ordinary. Bishops can, by apostolic faculties, erect the stations with the indulgences attached to them, and they constantly delegate this faculty to priests. The indulgences are attached to the crosses, not the pictures.

The fourteen stations are: (1) the sentence passed on our Lord by Pilate; (2) the receiving of the cross; (3) our Lord's first fall; (4) His meeting with His mother; (5) the bearing of the cross by Simon of Cyrene; (6) the wiping of Christ's face by Veronica with a handkerchief; (7) His second fall; (8) His words to the women of Jerusalem, "Weep not for me," etc.; (9) His third fall; (10) His being stripped of His garments; (11) His crucifixion; (12) His death; (13) the taking down of His body from the cross; (14) His burial.

Station I.*Jesus Condemned to Death.*

MY Jesus, oft have I signed thy death-warrant by my sins; save me by thy death from that death eternal I deserve.

Station II.*Jesus bears his Cross.*

MY Jesus, who by thine own will didst take on thee the Cross I make for thee by my sins; O, make me feel their heavy weight, and sorrow for them ever while I live.

Station III.*Jesus falls the first time beneath the Cross.*

MY Jesus, the heavy burden of my sins is on thee, and bears thee down beneath the Cross. My Jesus, I loathe them, I detest them, I cail on thee to pardon them: may thy grace aid me never to commit them more.

Station IV.*Jesus meets his Mother.*

JESUS most suffering! Mary Mother most sorrowful! if for the past by sin I have caused you pain and anguish, yet, by God's assisting grace, it shall be so no more; rather be ye my love henceforth till death.

Station V.*Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the Cross.*

MY Jesus, blest, thrice blest was he who aided thee to bear the Cross. Blest shall I be, if I, too, aid thee to bear the Cross, by patiently bowing my neck to the crosses thou shalt send me during life. My Jesus, give me grace to do so.

Station VI.*Jesus and Veronica.*

MY tender Jesus, who didst deign to print thy sacred face upon the cloth with which Veronica dried the sweat from off thy brows; print in my soul deep, I pray thee, the lasting memory of thy bitter pains.

Station VII.*Jesus falls again.*

MY Jesus, oft have I sinned, and oft by sin beat thee to the ground beneath the Cross. Help me to use the efficacious means of grace, that I may never fall again.

Station VIII.

Jesus comforts the pious women of Jerusalem.

MY Jesus, who didst comfort the pious women of Jerusalem, who wept to see thee bruised and torn ; comfort my soul with thy tender pity, for in thy pity lies my trust. May my heart ever answer thine !

Station IX.

Jesus falls a third time.

MY Jesus, by all thy bitter woes thou didst endure, when a third time the heavy Cross bowed thee to the earth, O, never, never, let me fall away ; but rather let me die than ever mortally sin again.

Station X.

Jesus stripped.

MY Jesus, stripped naked of thy clothes, and tortured with gall, strip me from love of things of earth, and make me loathe all that savors of the world and sin.

Station XI.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

MY Jesus, by thine agony when the cruel nails pierced thy tender hands and feet, and fixed them to the Cross, O, make me crucify my flesh with Christian penance.

Station XII.

Jesus dies on the Cross.

MY Jesus, three hours didst thou hang in agony, and then die for me ; then let me die before I sin, and if I live, live for thy love and faithful service.

Station XIII.

Jesus is taken from the Cross and laid on Mary's bosom.

MARY, Mother most sorrowful, the sword of grief went through thy soul when thou didst see Jesus lying lifeless on thy bosom ; ask for me hatred of sin, because sin slew thy Son, and wounded thine own heart, and then grace to live a Christian life, and save my soul.

Station XIV.

Jesus is laid in the tomb.

MY Jesus, beside thy Body in the tomb I too would lie dead ; and if I live, live but to thee, so one day to taste Heaven's bliss with thee, fruit of thy passion and thy bitter death. Amen.

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Blessed Virgin and St. Dominick.

THE ROSARY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.



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THE THREE MARYS AT THE CROSS.
THE 14 STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

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The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

A FORM of prayer in which fifteen decades of Aves, each decade being preceded by a Pater, and followed by a Gloria, are recited on beads. A mystery is contemplated during the recital of each decade, and the rosary is divided into three parts, each consisting of five decades, and known as a corona or chaplet. In the first chaplet the five joyful mysteries are the subjects of contemplation—viz., the Annunciation, Visitation, the Birth of our Lord, His presentation in the Temple, His being found after the three days' loss. The sorrowful mysteries contemplated in the second chaplet are, the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion. The glorious mysteries, which are allotted to the third chaplet are, the Resurrection of Christ, His Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Assumption, and the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin. The word rosary first occurs in Thomas Cantipratanus, who wrote in the latter part of the thirteenth century (*De Apibus*, ii. 13—quoted by the Bollandists, *Vita S. Dominici*). The original meaning is very doubtful. We think it most likely that the word was used in a mystical sense, and meant Mary's rose-garden. (So the writer of the article *Rosenkranz* in Herzog, *Encycl. für Protestant. Theol.*) It was also called *Psalterium Marianum* because of the number 150. Catholics in many parts still speak of a pair of beads, thus preserving a pure and ancient mode of speech, "pair" meaning "set," as in "pair of organs"—i. e., a set of organ pipes, or, in other words, an organ.

The practice of using beads, etc., as a help to memory in reciting a set number of prayers is not distinctively Christian, but it has long existed in the Church. Palladius, a writer of the fifth century (*Hist. Lausiac.* cap. 23), tells us that the Egyptian monk Paul in Pherme put 300 pebbles in his lap, and flung away one as he finished each of the 300 prayers he said. The English synod of Cealcythe (Mansi, *Concil.* tom. xiv. 360) in 816 orders *septem beltidum Paternoster* to be sung for a deceased bishop. We can only guess at the meaning. But Spelman's conjecture that it means belts or circles of Pater is plausible. William of Malmesbury (*De Gest. Pont. Angl.* iv. 4, quoted by the Bollandists, *loc. cit.*) says that God-

iva, who founded a religious house at Coventry in 1040, left a circle of gems strung together, on which she used to tell her prayers, that it might be hung on a statue of the Blessed Virgin.

So far we have only considered the general question of reciting prayers on beads, etc. From the eleventh century the Bollandists produce the following instances of a fixed number of Aves addressed to the Blessed Virgin. Herimanus, at the close of the century, mentions a person who recited sixty Aves daily. The monk Albert, who lived about 1005, said 150 every day; so did St. Agbert, who died in 1140.

Thus we find early traces of the use of something corresponding to beads, and we can trace the 150 Aves back farther than St. Dominic's time, but no instance presents itself of 150 Aves, much less of 150 Aves and fifteen Paters said on beads, before the lifetime of that saint. The notion that the Venerable Bede introduced the rosary is founded on an absurd etymology ("Bead," from "Beda"), and the statement of Polydore Virgil, who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century, that Peter the Hermit instituted the rosary, comes too late to have any weight. The common story that St. Dominic learnt the use of the rosary from the Blessed Virgin by revelation, and propagated it during the crusade against the Albigenses, has been accepted by later Popes—viz., Leo X., Pius V., Gregory XIII., Sixtus V., Alexander VII., Innocent XI., Clement XI. This belief rests, according to Benedict XIV. (*De Fest.* § 160), on the tradition of the order; no contemporary writer vouches for it. But the Dominican Friar Nicolas (Quetif and Echard, *Script. Ord. Præd.* tom. i., p. 411) gave in 1270 to the B. Christina a Paternoster, *quod personaliter in annis portaverat*. Dominicans, too, are represented on a tomb of Humbertus Delphinus, who became a Dominican about 1350, with rosaries in their hands, so that the rosary, in the strict sense, cannot be much later than St. Dominic.

But, of course, the Ave of those days was not identical with the modern form. It was simply, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Further, the great Dominican writers, Quetif and Echard, show that the meditation on the mysteries is much later than St. Dominic. It began with a Dominican, Alanus de Rupe (De la Roche), born about 1428 (*Script. O. P.* tom. i., p. 852). (The Bollandist dissertation on the Rosary, in the first vol. for August, Quetif and Echard; Benedict XIV. *De Fest.*)

According to Benedict XIV., a Confraternity of the Rosary at Piacenza was indulgenced as early as 1254 by Alexander IV. The Living Rosary, in which fifteen persons unite to say the whole rosary every month, was approved by Gregory XVI.

A popular manual by Labis, translated by an English Passionist, enumerates the following rosaries besides the Dominican—viz., that of St. Bridget, 7 Paters and 63 Aves, in honor of the joys and sorrows of the Blessed Virgin and the 63 years of her life; that of the Seven Dolors, a Servite devotion; that of the Immaculate Conception, approved by Pius IX. in 1855; the Crown of our Saviour, attributed to Michael of Florence, a Camaldolese monk in 1516, and consisting of 33 Paters, 5 Aves, and a Credo; the Rosary of the Five Wounds, approved by Leo XII. in 1823 at the prayer of the Passionists.

THE FIRST PART.—THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES.

The First Mystery—The Incarnation.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Angel Gabriel saluted our Blessed Lady, *Full of Grace*; and declared unto her the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our Father, etc., once, Hail Mary, etc., ten times, Glory be to the Father, etc.

The Second Mystery—The Visitation.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the blessed Virgin Mary, understanding from the Angel that her cousin, St. Elizabeth, had conceived, went with haste to the mountains of Judea to visit her, and remained with her three months.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Third Mystery—Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the blessed Virgin Mary, when the time of her delivery was come, brought forth our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, at midnight, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inns at Bethlehem.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fourth Mystery—The Presentation in the Temple.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the most blessed Virgin Mary, on the day of her Purification, presented the child Jesus in the temple, where holy Simeon, giving thanks to God with great devotion, received him into his arms.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fifth Mystery—The finding of the child Jesus in the Temple.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the blessed Virgin Mary, having lost, without any fault of hers, her beloved Son in Jerusalem, sought Him for the space of three days, and at length found Him in the temple, in the midst of the doctors disputing with them, being of the age of twelve years.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

The Salve Regina.

Hail! holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! to thee we cry, poor banished sons of Eve, to thee we send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping, in this valley of tears; turn, then, most gracious advocate, thy eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile is ended, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement! O pious! O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, holy Mother of God!

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

O God! whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that, meditating upon those mysteries in the most holy Rosary of the most blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain, and obtain what they promise; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE SECOND PART.—THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES.

First Mystery—The Bloody Sweat in the Garden.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus was so afflicted for us in the garden of Gethsemane, that His Body was bathed in a bloody sweat, which ran trickling down in great drops to the ground.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc., as before.

Second Mystery—The Scourging of our Blessed Lord at the Pillar.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, after being derided, calumniated, buffeted, and filled with reproaches, was, by Pilate's order, most cruelly scourged, and thus abandoned to the fury of the Jews.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Third Mystery—The Crowning with Thorns.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how those cruel ministers of Satan platted a crown of thorns and most cruelly pressed it on the head of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fourth Mystery—Jesus Carrying the Cross.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being sentenced to die, bore, with the most amazing patience, the Cross, which was laid upon Him for His greater torment and ignominy.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fifth Mystery—The Crucifixion.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being come to Mount Calvary, was stripped of His clothes, and

His hands and feet most cruelly nailed to the Cross, in the presence of His most afflicted mother.

Hail, holy Queen, etc., with the verse and prayer as above.

THE THIRD PART.—THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.

First Mystery—The Resurrection.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ triumphing gloriously over death, rose again the third day, immortal and impassible.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc., as before.

Second Mystery—The Ascension.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, forty days after His resurrection, ascended into Heaven, attended by angels, in the sight of His most holy Mother, His holy apostles and disciples, to the great admiration of them all.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Third Mystery—The Coming of the Holy Ghost to the Disciples.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being seated at the right hand of God, sent, as He had promised, the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, who, after He was ascended, returning to Jerusalem, continued in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary, expecting the performance of His promise.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fourth Mystery—The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the glorious Virgin, twelve years after the resurrection of her Son, passed out of this world unto Him, and was by Him assumed into Heaven, accompanied by the holy angels.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Fifth Mystery—The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin in Heaven.

Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the glorious Virgin Mary was, with great jubilee, and exultation of the whole court of Heaven, and particular glory of all the saints, crowned by her Son, with the brightest diadem of glory.

Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be, etc.

Let us Pray.

O Glorious Queen of all Heavenly citizens! we beseech thee; accept this Rosary, which as a crown of roses, we offer at thy feet, and grant, most gracious Lady! that, by thy intercession, our souls may be inflamed with so ardent a desire of seeing thee so gloriously crowned, that it may never die in us, until it be changed into the happy fruition of thy blessed sight. Amen.

Hail, holy Queen, etc., with the verse and prayer as before.

A CONCISE EXPOSITION
OF THE
TENETS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,
CONCERNING THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

THE doctrine of the Catholic Church with respect to the honor which is due to the saints, and especially to the blessed Virgin, is founded on the most obvious principles of reason; and expressly sanctioned by numerous and explicit warrants of Scripture.

We are inclined, by the impulse of nature, to be pleased with objects that are beautiful, and the best feelings of the human heart prompt us to do homage to goodness and virtue. Those feelings are in perfect accordance with the principles of right reason, for it cannot be wrong to admire excellence nor unreasonable to esteem what is worthy of veneration. God commands us to "render to all men their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honor to whom honor" (Rom. xiii. 7), and thus expressly sanctions our doing homage to the exalted dignity and transcendent splendor of His servants in heaven, who, "having overcome, are clothed in white, and walk with Him because they are worthy." (Rev. iii. 4.) Jesus Christ declares that to those "that shall overcome, He will give to sit with Him on His throne" (Rev. iii. 21), "and they shall be like to the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. xxii. 30), "and shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. xiii. 43); that "they shall see God face to face" (1 Cor. xiii. 12); "and beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, they are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18), "and they shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xxi.-xxii. 5.)

Such is the dignity which the Lord God confers upon His servants. He exalts them to a fellowship with Himself, and makes them partakers of His throne and glory. It is an imperative duty, therefore, to honor the saints, and in doing so we follow the example of God Himself.

But while the dignity of the saints claims our respectful homage, their ardent charity demands the warmest affection of our hearts. Seeing God face to face, they cannot cease to love Him, and loving Him, they must also love all the members of His mystical body here on earth, and earnestly desire their eternal happiness; for "there is joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance." (Luke xv. 10.) It is therefore a portion of the happiness as well as of the duty of the saints to pray to God for their brethren on earth. "And the four living creatures, and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev. v. 8); "and another angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer the prayer of all the saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel." (Rev. viii. 3.) And the angel Raphael speaks as follows to holy Tobias: "when thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayers to the Lord" (Tob. xii. 12); and in Zach. i. 12 we read that "the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem; and on the cities of Juda with which thou hast been angry? This is now the seventh year: and the Lord answered the angel, that spoke in me, good words, comfortable words."

Here, then, is evidence that the angels and saints offer up their prayers to the throne of grace on behalf of their brethren on earth and that God responds to them "good words, comfortable words." It is absurd, therefore, to deny that it is lawful to ask for the prayers of the blessed in heaven. Such prayers are evidently agreeable to God, and must be profitable to man. For as "the Lord accepted the face of Job" (xlii. 8), who was still in this state of probation, how much more the face of those who "have proved themselves worthy;" "who are made to their God a kingdom and priests" (Rev. v. 10); "who shall judge nations and rule over people" (Wisd. iii. 8), "and shall reign upon the earth." (Rev. v. 10.)

In conformity with the evidence of the foregoing, and numerous other express warrants of Holy Writ, the Catholic Church teaches that "The saints who reign with Christ offer up their prayers to God for men, and that it is useful and good to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, help and assistance, in order to obtain blessings from God, through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who alone is our Redeemer and Saviour." (Conc. Trid., Sess. 25.) In the catechism of the Council

of Trent, the infinite difference between the worship which is due to God, and the honor which, on His account, may be given to the saints, is so strongly marked and so fully and clearly explained as to obviate all the cavils raised against Catholics on that subject. A Catholic child, acquainted with the first outlines of the Christian doctrine, will commit no mistake on that point; and the most rude peasant in the most remote part of Ireland, is quite aware that it would be idolatry to give to the saints the honor which he owes to God, from whom alone he hopes for mercy, while he looks for nothing from the saints but the assistance of their prayers; and hence it is that he always concludes his supplication to the saints with the words, "through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Catholics in every age of the Church had a special devotion to the blessed Virgin. They venerated her more than the other saints, because her sanctity was far superior to theirs. They believed her to be full of grace and blessed among women, and to hold a relation to God, as the Mother of Jesus Christ, to which no other creature could lay claim. They have recourse to her intercession, therefore, with the utmost confidence; knowing that her divine Son was obedient to her here on earth, and that, in His last agony on the cross, He committed the children of His Church to her care in the person of St. John, His beloved disciple.

But, notwithstanding the profound veneration in which Catholics hold the blessed Virgin, and the precedence which they justly give her above all God's creatures, they limit their respect within proper bounds, and stop infinitely short of paying her that honor which is due to God, and which it would be idolatry to give to any other being. To God they offer supreme homage as the great creator and preserver of the universe. They adore, honor and love Him for His own sake, and on account of His own innate perfections. From Him they ask for grace and mercy, and deliverance from spiritual and temporal evils, because He alone is omnipotent—He alone can forgive and relieve them. From the blessed Virgin, however, they expect no more than her intercession, and the homage which they pay her is for the sake of God, is directed through her to God, and ultimately terminates in God.

Whatever, therefore, may be the terms used by Catholic writers, or in Catholic books of devotion, relative to the blessed Virgin, they are all to be understood as limited to the genuine sense of the Catholic doctrine; no language, however strong or metaphorical, must be supposed—for it is not meant—to confer upon her any attribute or privilege which is peculiar to God. If she is invoked to "assist, defend, deliver us," etc., it is always understood by her prayers and intercession; and if she be styled the hope of sinners, the mediatrix, the refuge of the afflicted, the help of

Christians, the merciful, the all-powerful Virgin," all those terms are to be understood in the same limited sense, and to mean no more than that God, in His infinite goodness and mercy, is ever willing to grant her petitions.

The holy fathers and other spiritual writers seem to have exhausted the powers of language in celebrating the virtues of this august Virgin Mother of God ; and, full of tender devotion toward her, they have sometimes used expressions so strong and metaphorical that the enemies of Catholicity, either from ignorance of its real principles, or through invidious motives, have imputed doctrines on this subject to Catholics which they abhor and utterly disavow ; and as the little book now presented to the public was principally compiled by its venerable author from the writings of the saints and the holy fathers, it has been considered prudent to prefix the foregoing observations, in order that the enemies of the blessed Mother of God may not affect to discover new grounds for calumny and invective.

With regard to the histories or miracles recorded in this or any other book of devotion, it may be useful to remark that no histories or miracles, except those recorded in the Holy Scriptures, are proposed to Catholics as parts of divine revelation or articles of faith. All others rest on their own bare historical authority, and the credit due to their narrators.

In conclusion, it may not be amiss to observe, that the reasonableness of the Catholic doctrine with respect to the invocation of saints is so obvious and accords so fully with the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and the constant belief of the primitive Church, that very many learned Protestants have acknowledged it. Bishop Montague writes as follows in his *Antidote*, page 20: " I do not deny but the saints are mediators, as they are called, of prayer and intercession. They interpose with God by their supplications, and mediate by their prayers." And again, in his *Treatise on the Invocation of Saints*, page 118, he says: " I see no absurdity in nature, no incongruity unto analogy of faith, no repugnancy at all to sacred Scripture, much less impiety for any man to say, as they of the Roman Church do, ' Holy Mary, pray for me ; ' " and he adds, " Indeed, I grant Christ is not wronged in His mediation by such invocation of the saints, and this," he continues, " is the common voice with general concurrence, without contradiction, of reverend and learned antiquity, for aught I ever could read or understand, and I see no reason or cause to depart from them, touching intercession in this kind." (*Invocation of Saints*, page 103.)

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE
OF
SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI.



ALPHONSUS MARIE DE LIGUORI was born of a distinguished family, near Naples, on September 27, 1696. In his infancy he evinced the happiest dispositions for piety and learning, and in his youth he was a model of fervor and every virtue to all of his age. He was yet very young, when the blessed Francis Jeronimo predicted that he would live to the age of ninety; that he would become a bishop, and render very important services to the Church. Nevertheless, he embraced the profession of a lawyer at the age of sixteen years, after having succeeded to admiration in his studies. He pursued this career with great applause, until, having met an unforeseen disappointment in one of his pleadings, he determined, in spite of the brilliant advantages held out to him, to embrace the ecclesiastical state. In pursuance of this resolution, he took the clerical habit, August 31, 1722, and thenceforward his greatest delight was found in the Church, at the hospital, and in practicing the rudest austerities.

Ordained priest in 1726, he at once commenced his apostolic career. His time was divided between the confessional and the pulpit, and his labors were crowned with abundant fruit. When he gave a mission, the reputation of his sanctity and miracles attracted a crowd of auditors, who testified by sighs and tears the wonderful effects of his preaching.

Inflamed with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and afflicted beyond measure at the ignorance of the country people, our saint, in 1732, laid the foundation of his institute, under the title of The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Despite numberless contradictions, this new society was soon established in different countries, and approved of by Pope Benedict XIV., in a brief, dated February 25, 1749. In the midst of so many labors and multiplied practices of devotion and penance, Alphonsus, who had made a vow, hitherto perhaps unknown in the Church, "never to lose a moment of time," composed many books of theology and devotion: old age and infirmity diminished not his zeal. Clement XIII. made him bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths, a suffragan

see of Benevento, much against his will ; knowing the obligations of the episcopacy, he had more than once refused it ; an express command from his holiness alone induced him to accept the mitre. His promotion took place June 12, 1762. It did not cause him to mitigate his austerities, nor alter his rigid mode of life. He continued to practise poverty ; redoubled his efforts for the salvation of his brethren, and the relief of the poor ; confirmed ecclesiastical discipline ; founded new asylums of charity ; and, in fine, sanctified his whole diocese by his preaching and example. After thus spending about thirteen years, weakened by labors, mortifications and ill health, he obtained of Pius VI. leave to resign his bishopric, much against the desire of his holiness ; this occurred in July, 1775, when Alphonsus instantly retired to a house of his dear congregation, at Nocera de Pagania, where he spent the rest of his days in prayer and penance, and died August 1, 1787, aged ninety years.

It would be tedious to detail the austerities by which this great servant of God afflicted his body, and the privations he imposed on himself, either to practice penance, or to exercise more abundant charity toward the poor. In a time of great scarcity, he sold for their use all his plate, the buckles of his shoes, even his ring and pastoral cross, replacing the latter with one of brass. But nothing can give a more perfect idea of the eminent sanctity of this great saint than the testimony of his confessors. They declared that he had not only preserved his baptismal innocence, but even that he had never deliberately committed venial sin.

“That which most of all contributed to preserve his innocence,” says the author of *Reflections on the Doctrine and Sanctity of the B. Liguori*, “was his tender devotion to the blessed Virgin, to whom he was specially consecrated. Replenished with love for, and confidence in, Mary, he addressed himself to her in all his wants, and felt quite assured of obtaining all he asked through her intercession.” This blessed Virgin, whose praises he was never weary of recounting in the pulpit, and in his writings, loaded him with the most signal favors. She often appeared to him in his most tender infancy, and deigned to become his instructress. “She told me admirable things,” said he to his confessor, the day before his death. “We may,” continues the same author, “compare Alphonsus to St. Bernard, by the sweetness of his expressions, and the abundance of his sentiments, in celebrating Mary’s greatness by word and writing. When he preached in her honor, his auditory was most numerous : the most obstinate were converted, and several times he was seen so transported by his subject as to be raised in ecstasy from the earth.”

His usual practices in honor of this august Mother were to pray every day prostrate before her image, to fast on Saturdays and vigils of her feasts on bread and water ; to wear the scapular of beads round his

neck, and another at his cincture; to recite often the "Hail Mary," and recommend to others the devotion of the rosary. He, moreover, made in her honor, and under her patronage, the vow we have spoken of, never to lose time, as also to preach her glories, to recite her rosary, to approach the tribunal of penance on Saturdays, to succor those afflicted by pestilence, and to do always that which he believed most perfect.

These facts were so public, his reputation for sanctity was so general, that persons of the greatest distinction, after his death, were most urgent with Pius VI. in soliciting his canonization. The holy father himself, in his brief for commencing the proceedings, said that he loved Liguori during his life, and remarked in him the most extraordinary piety and devotion.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites, having made the most rigorous examination of the writings of the saint to the number of a hundred or more, pronounced that there was nothing in them deserving of censure, and this sentence was approved by Pius VII. in 1803.

His successor, Leo XII., accompanied his brief to the editor of the works of the blessed Liguori by a golden medal.* To this examination succeeded that of the virtues of Liguori; the goodness of the cause appeared at once so evident, that the Pope dispensed with the decree of Urban VIII., which forbade this special scrutiny to be made until after the expiration of fifty years from the death of the person in question. The cardinals were unanimous (a thing very uncommon) that the virtues of the deceased had attained the heroic degree, which the Pope confirmed by his solemn decree of May 7, 1807.

The process of his beatification specifies that more than a hundred miracles were performed by the saint during his life, and twenty-eight after death. The brief declaring him blessed, dated September 6, 1816, authorized the celebration of a Mass in his honor, for which the Pope prescribed suitable prayers every year in the dioceses of Nocera and St. Agatha. In consequence of numerous solicitations, his holiness was induced on February 28, 1818, to sign the decree which introduced the cause of this blessed man for canonization. At length the decree of his canonization was published by his late holiness, Pope Pius VIII., on May 16, 1830.

* This brief is dated February 19, 1825.

THE
GLORIES OF MARY,
IN
A PARAPHRASE
ON THE
SALVE REGINA.

CHAPTER I.

“Salva Regina, Mater Misericordiae” (Hail Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy).

I—HOW GREAT SHOULD BE OUR CONFIDENCE IN MARY, QUEEN OF MERCY.



THE Virgin Mary having been elevated to the dignity of Mother of the King of kings, the holy Catholic Church gives her the title of Queen, and wishes that all her children should salute her in that quality. “If the Son be the King,” says St. Athanasius, “why should not the Mother be Queen?” “From the moment that Mary consented to become the Mother of God,” says St. Bernardine of Sienna, “she merited to receive sovereignty over all creatures.” “Mary and Jesus having but one and the same flesh,” says St. Arnand, abbot, “why should not the Mother enjoy, conjointly with the Son, the honors of royalty?”

Mary is, then, Queen of the universe, since Jesus is its King; thus, as St. Bernardine again observes, “as many creatures as obey God, so many obey the glorious Virgin; everything in heaven and on earth, which is subject to God, is also under the empire of His most holy Mother.”

“Reign O Mary,” says the Abbot Gueric; “dispose at pleasure of the goods of your Son; power and dominion belonging to the Mother and spouse of the King of kings.”

Mary is Queen, but let us tell Christians, for their consolation, that she is a Queen full of clemency and sweetness, and only occupied in assuaging the miseries of her subjects. "The word 'Queen,'" says Albertus Magnus, "signifies compassion and care of the poor, whereas the word 'Empress' means rigor and severity." "Kings and queens," says Seneca, "manifest their greatness in succoring the unfortunate, hence it is that at their coronation, oil, the symbol of mercy, is poured out on their heads."

However, there must be a commixture of justice, since they are obliged to punish the guilty. Yet this is not the case with Mary: she is Queen of mercy alone; she is a sovereign, not to punish sinners, but to pardon and forgive them. Writing on those words of the psalmist, "I have learned two things, power belongs to God, and mercy to the Lord," Gerson observes that, as the kingdom of God consists in mercy and justice, the Lord has, as it were, divided it, reserving to Himself the dominion of justice, and yielding to His Mother that of mercy. St. Thomas confirms this explanation when he says, in his preface to the canonical epistles, that one-half of the kingdom of God was given to Mary when she conceived and brought forth the eternal Word, so that she became Queen of mercy, as her Son is King of justice.

A learned interpreter, writing on this verse of the Psalm, "Lord, give thy judgment to the king, and thy justice to the king's son," says to God, "Lord, you have given justice to the King your Son, because you have reserved mercy for the Queen His Mother." St. Bonaventure, and Ernest, archbishop of Prague, explain this verse in nearly the same terms. "The Lord has anointed you with the oil of gladness," says David, speaking prophetically of Mary. The holy Virgin has indeed, then, received from God a sacred unction to heal the wounds of the guilty sons of Adam.

Albertus Magnus says that Mary was prefigured by Queen Esther, of whom we read in the Holy Scripture that she had been raised to the throne for the preservation of her brethren, the Jewish people. What Mardochai said to this woman, poor sinners may address to Mary. "Imagine not, most powerful and ever-glorious Virgin, that God has elevated you to the dignity of Queen, merely for your own personal honor and advantage, but rather that you may mediate, and obtain pardon for men, your offending brethren:" and if Assuerus heard the petition of Esther through love, will not God, who has an infinite love for Mary, fling away at her request the thunderbolts which He was going to hurl on wretched sinners? When, coming before the throne, she says, "My King and my God, if I have found favor in your sight (and she well knows that among all the children of Eve, she is the only one who has found the grace forfeited by our first parents), give me the life of my

people : save those sinners whose cause I advocate." And will God reject her prayer ? Is it not of her it is said, "The law of clemency is on her lips" ? Indeed, every petition she offers is as a law emanating from the Lord, by which He obliges Himself to be merciful to those for whom she intercedes. St. Bernard, asking the question why the Church calls Mary the Queen of mercy, answers it himself by saying, "It is because she opens at pleasure the abyss of the divine mercy, so that no sinner, however enormous his crimes may be, can perish if he is protected by Mary."

But perhaps the immaculate holiness of this Virgin Queen terrifies and hinders you from approaching her, sullied as you are with innumerable crimes. "Ah, no," says St. Gregory, "fear nothing ; the more holy and more elevated in glory Mary is, the more sweet and merciful toward the sinner who wishes to be converted."

Earthly monarchs, by the display they make, render themselves formidable to their subjects, but the Queen of heaven has nothing terrific, nothing awful nor austere in her appearance ; on the contrary, she shows in every feature her mildness and benignity toward all.

Mary not only gives but offers to all men without exception milk and wool ; the milk of mercy, and the wool of her intercession ; the former to reanimate our confidence, and the latter as a rampart against the thunders of almighty vengeance.

Suetonius recounts that the Emperor Titus never refused any petition presented to him, and when reproached for it by his courtiers, he used to say that "A prince should not dismiss any one dissatisfied." This at most was but a vain show of clemency, for often he could not keep his word, from inability or unwillingness to grant the desired favor. But it is not so with Mary : she disappoints no one ; she can do all she promises, and she does not want the will ; none depart from her presence discontented. "Mary," says St. Bernard to her, "how can you refuse to assist poor sinners, since you are Queen of mercy ? Who are the subjects of mercy but the miserable ? Hence, being the most miserable of all sinners, I am the first of your subjects, and you should take more care of me than the rest."

Pity us, then, Queen of mercy, and think of our salvation : say not (let me use the expression of St. Gregory of Nicomedia) that our sins render us unworthy of your aid, for your clemency surpasses our malice. Nothing resists your power, because the Creator of all honors you as His Mother, making your glory His own. Mary owes her Son an infinite gratitude for choosing her for His mother, but it is not less true to say, that Jesus Christ has contracted a species of obligation toward her for the human existence He received from her, and in recompense for this benefit He honors her by hearing her prayers.

From all we have said, let us now conclude how great should be our confidence in Mary. There is not a being on earth who has not, some time or other, experienced the compassion or shared in the benefit of this all-merciful Queen. "I am," said she to St. Bridget, "the Queen of heaven, and Mother of mercy ; I am the joy of the just, and the gate through which sinners go to God ; to no one on earth have I refused my clemency ; there is no one who has not obtained some grace through my intercession, though it were no greater than that of being less violently tempted by the devil ; in fine, unless a person be absolutely cursed (this should be understood of the irrevocable malediction of the damned), how wicked and reprobate soever he is he may obtain grace and mercy through me : and hence, ' woe to him who, having it in his power to profit of my commiseration, does it not, but is lost through his own fault.' "

Let us go, then, Christians, let us go to this most gracious Queen, and crowd around her throne, without being deterred by our crimes and abominations. Let us be convinced that if Mary has been crowned Queen of mercy, it is in order that the greatest sinners may be saved by her intercession, and form her crown in heaven. "Come," says the spouse in the Canticles to her, "come from Libanus to be crowned, the summits of Amana, the craggy tops of Sanir and Hermon ; the caverns of lions and mountains of leopards shall form your diadem." In effect, the souls of sinners, where sin resides in all its frightful deformity, may be justly compared to the haunts of these ferocious monsters. "O great Queen," exclaims the Abbot Rupert, commenting on this text, "it is by you the miserable are saved, and because their salvation is your work, they shall form your crown in heaven."

Example.

During the pontificate of St. Gregory the Great, the people of Rome experienced in a most striking manner the protection of the blessed Virgin. A frightful pestilence raged in the city to such an extent that thousands were carried off, and so suddenly, that they had not time to make the least preparation. It could not be arrested by the vows and prayers which the holy Pope caused to be offered in all quarters, until he resolved on having recourse to the Mother of God. Having commanded the clergy and people to go in general procession to the church of our Lady, called St. Mary Major, carrying the picture of the Virgin, painted by St. Luke, the miraculous effects of her intercession were soon experienced : in every street, as they passed, the plague ceased, and before the end of the procession an angel in human form was seen on the tower of Adrian, named, ever since the Castle of St. Angelo, sheathing a bloody sabre. At the

same moment, the angels were heard singing the anthem, "*Regina cæli*," etc. (Triumph, O Queen), and Alleluia. The holy Pope added the words, "*Ora pro nobis Deum*" (Petition God our souls to save). The Church has since used this anthem to salute the blessed Virgin in Easter time.—*True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Prayer.

Queen of heaven and earth! Mother of God! my sovereign mistress! I present myself before you as a poor mendicant before a mighty queen. From the height of your throne deign to cast your eyes on a miserable sinner, and lose not sight of him till you render him truly holy.

O illustrious Virgin, you are Queen of the universe, and, consequently, mine; I desire, then, to consecrate myself more particularly to your service; dispose of me according to your good pleasure; direct me, for I abandon myself wholly to your conduct; nevermore let me be guided by myself; chastise me if I disobey you; your correction will be sweet and agreeable; I am no longer mine, I am all yours; save me, O powerful Queen, save me by your intercession with your Son.

2—HOW GREAT OUR CONFIDENCE SHOULD BE IN MARY AS OUR MOTHER.

It is not without reason that the servants of Mary denominate her Mother. Yes, she is truly our Mother, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit; not by giving us the life of the body, but that more excellent one of the soul. Sin deprived us of grace, which is the life of the soul, and Jesus our Redeemer, in the excess of His love and mercy, came to restore it to us. "I am come," said He, "that they may have life and have it more abundantly." More abundantly, since as theologians teach, the redemption of the Saviour conferred on us more benefits than the sin of Adam had caused us evils. This Prince of peace, as He is styled by Isaiah, in reconciling us to God has brought us forth to Him in baptism, and is thereby become our Father, and as it is Mary who has given Him to the world in Bethlehem and offered Him for its redemption on Calvary, we can truly say that she has given us life, and that she is our Mother.

Mary, then, became our spiritual Mother at two different periods: first, when she consented to be the Mother of God. St. Bernard says, "The blessed Virgin contributed most efficaciously to our redemption by her consent to the angel's proposal; and thenceforward bore all men in her womb, by her thirst after their salvation." St. Luke writes in his gospel, "Mary brought forth her first-born son:" these words one day troubled St. Gertrude; she could not comprehend why the evangelist wrote, "Mary's first-born," Jesus Christ being her only son, until the Lord re-

moved her perplexity by assuring her that though Jesus had been Mary's only son, according to the flesh, He was still her first-born, for all men were her children according to the spirit ; again, commenting on this verse of the Canticles; "Your fruitful womb is like a garden of wheat environed with lilies," St. Ambrose says, "In the most pure womb of Mary there was sown one sole grain of wheat, yet it may be called a garden of wheat, because all the elect were included in this chosen grain." "The first-born among many brethren ;" and that she who gave Him life by bearing this only seed became the Mother of a great multitude.

The second circumstance in which Mary became our Mother, is when on Calvary, with a heart rent with sorrow, she offered this only Son to His Father as a holocaust for our sins. Her charity, which made her cooperate in the establishment of the Church, rendered her the mother, according to the spirit, of the members of the Saviour. "I have not preserved my own vine," says the spouse ; "that is," says St. William Abbot, "Mary has not spared her own Son, her own soul, for the salvation of many." Beholding Jesus expire in torturing agony, her soul was pierced with that sword of sorrow, predicted by Simeon ; she consented to the stroke, knowing that God required it for our redemption, and thus brought us forth anew.

Hence, although it be true that in the work of redemption, Jesus wished to tread the wine-press alone, it is not less true that, in consideration of Mary's thirst for our salvation, He was pleased that she might cooperate with Him by the generous sacrifice of His life. This is what the Saviour Himself gave us to understand, when, before He expired, looking from the summit of His cross on His Mother and His beloved disciple, He said first to Mary, "Behold thy son," as if He had said, behold the man that is born to grace by the sacrifice of my life which you now offer : afterwards He said to His disciple, "Behold thy Mother," words which rendered the blessed Virgin the Mother not only of St. John, but of all men : for, as Silveira observes, the evangelist uses the expression "He said to His disciple," and not, "He said to John," in order to show that Jesus has given Mary as a Mother to all those who, being Christians, bear the name of "disciples."

Mary, then, is our Mother, and what a Mother ! Happy, thrice happy are they, who enjoy the protection—who live under the guardianship of this most blessed and amiable Mother.

Who will dare snatch from her the children of her womb ? What passion too strong to be vanquished, what temptation too violent to be overcome, if they place themselves under the protection of such a Mother ?

Naturalists say of the whale that when her young ones are tossed about by a storm, or pursued by the fishermen, she opens her mouth and

receives them into her bowels, as a place of security: thus, when Mary sees her children pursued by, and ready to sink under, temptation, she hides them in the womb of her motherly protection, nor does she let them forth until they arrive at the haven of salvation. O tender, O compassionate Virgin, be thou blessed, and may He be eternally praised who has given thee to us as our Mother. We read in the revelations of St. Bridget that Mary one day said to her, "If a mother saw her son on the point of being killed by an enemy, do you not think she would use every effort to save him? such is my conduct toward my children, however wicked, when they have recourse to me." Fear not, then, in all your combats against the powers of hell, if you invoke Mary; you will always be victorious if you say to her these words of the Church, "We fly to thy patronage," etc. (*Sub tuum præsidium, etc.*) Oh, how many victories have been gained over hell by this short prayer! A great servant of God, Sister Mary of the Cross, Benedictine, used no other to put devils to flight.

Courage, then, child of Mary! know that she considers as children all who are ambitious of the title. "Rejoice, says St. Bonaventure; "the process of your salvation cannot miscarry, because the sentence depends on Jesus, who is our brother, and Mary, who is our Mother." This same idea caused St. Anselm to leap for joy: "Precious confidence! secure refuge!" says he, "since the Mother of my God is *my* Mother also." How well-founded is the good Christian's hope of salvation, since it depends on the best of brothers, and the tenderest of mothers! Let us hearken to the invitation of this amiable Mother, who calls us in this passage of the book of Wisdom: "*Si quis est parvulus venia ad me*" (Let little ones come to me). Children have ever on their lips the name of their mother; the least danger that appears causes them to exclaim, "Mother! mother!" O Mary, the most amiable of all mothers, behold our desires; they are, that in all dangers, on all occasions, we may fly to you as your children, and that you, clasping us to your maternal breast, may "Show yourself our Mother."

Example.

The Emperor Leo, surnamed the Isaurian, having raised a persecution against the worship of holy images, met a most formidable antagonist in St. John Damascene. Though out of the empire of this impious prince, he thought himself obliged to assist his brethren in so pressing a necessity, and being well skilled in theology, he wrote three solid discourses, so eloquent and conclusive that they at once confounded the heretics, and confirmed the Catholics in their faith. This so irritated the Greek emperor that he determined on the destruction of the saint; if not by open violence, at least by the base manœuvres of calumny and deceit. He

therefore caused a letter to be addressed to himself, as if from St. John, who then governed the city of Damascus for the caliph, inviting him to come before the city, and that he would cause the gates to be opened to him. The signature of the saint was so well counterfeited that when presented to the caliph, together with another letter from the treacherous Leo, as a proof of his fidelity to the treaty, he instantly sends for St. John, reproaches him with his treason, and without giving him time to prove his innocence, he, in a fit of rage, orders his right hand to be amputated, and nailed to a stake, which was exposed in a public part of the city.

The evening of the same day, thinking that the caliph's anger was now cooled, the saint sent to beg that his hand might be restored to him ; the prince consented, seeing already that the whole was but a forgery of the Greek emperor. As soon as St. John received the amputated limb, he went and prostrated himself before an image of the holy Virgin, and said to her with lively faith and confidence : " Mother of my God, assured refuge and sweetest consolation of all the faithful, you know that it is for having defended the worship of your images, and those of your divine Son, together with His saints, that I have lost this hand ; confound error this day and refute calumny by joining my hand to the arm from which it has been severed, that it may evermore be employed in combating your enemies, and those of Jesus Christ." In saying those words he placed his arm near the hand, and they were instantly joined, no mark of separation remaining except a red circle, as if to render the miracle more certain. Full of gratitude and devotion, the saint spent the rest of the night in singing the praises of the Lord and His blessed Mother, in concert with his domestics.

The miracle was too extraordinary not to make some noise. It soon reached the ears of the caliph : and after having ocular demonstration of it, he embraced the saint, begged his pardon for being too rash, and swore to grant him any request he wished to make, by way of reparation. St. John, who had all his life sighed after holy solitude, availed himself of this promise, to beg leave to resign his government. This request much afflicted the prince, being unwilling to lose so worthy a viceroy, but in consideration of his oath, he suffered him to retire.

Prayer.

O Mary, my most amiable Mother, how is it that I, your child, so little resemble you? You so perfect, and I so perverse ; you all inflamed with divine love, and I wholly alive to creatures ; you so rich in grace, and I so poor in virtue ; O how unworthy I am of my Mother ! but do not forbid me to call you Mother, in punishment of my ingratitude ; this amiable title consoles me ; it redoubles my tenderness for you, animates

my confidence in you, and reminds me of my obligation to love you. May I, then, invoke you during life, and die when calling on Mary my Mother, my blessed, amiable Mother.

3—THE GREAT LOVE BORNE US BY MARY OUR MOTHER.

Mary being our Mother, it is easy to conceive how dear we are to her heart. The love of parents for their children is a necessary love, so that, as St. Thomas remarks, if the divine law makes it obligatory on children to love their parents, it is no less binding on parents to love their children ; even the law of nature inspires this love. We find it evinced by ferocious beasts. Naturalists say, that if attracted by the cries of her young, which the hunters often carry off, the tigress will plunge into the sea, and pursue the vessel in which they are embarked, until she overtakes it. What, then, must Mary's tenderness be for her children? "Ah," she says, "though a mother should forget the child of her womb, never will I forget my children."

"I am the Mother of beautiful love," says the book of Wisdom, speaking in the person of Mary ; yes, since it is charity that has rendered her our Mother, according to a learned writer, she glories in being all love in our regard. Who can comprehend the ardor and liveliness of this sentiment in Mary? Inflamed with charity, this holy Virgin burned with a desire to die for us with Jesus Christ ; while the Son offered Himself for our redemption on the cross, the Mother immolated herself at His feet, "in the preparation of her heart."

To appreciate more closely the ardor and extent of this love, let us examine its motives. The first of these is the love of God. St. John says that love of God and of our neighbor are indivisible : it must, then, be concluded that a person cannot increase in one without augmenting the other. It is because the saints loved God that they did so much for their brethren ; fortune, liberty, reputation, life itself, all were sacrificed for the interest of their neighbor. Read the life of a St. Francis Xavier ; you behold him braving every danger, surmounting every obstacle, to convert a savage people ; a St. Vincent of Paul takes the place of a poor prisoner on board the galleys, to restore him to his family ; and a St. Fidelis joyfully sacrifices his life for the conversion of an idolatrous city.

If the love of God led the saints to these great things, what must it not have operated in Mary, who from the moment of her conception loved Him more than all the angels and saints together? "The divine flame which consumed me, was so intense," says she herself to Sister Mary of the Cross, "that it would in an instant consume heaven and earth if allowed to operate upon them : the ardors even of the seraphim were but a chilling blast in comparison of mine." If Mary has so far surpassed the saints

in love of God, how far must she exceed them in love of the neighbor? "If you reunite the love of the tenderest mothers," says F. Nieremberg, S. J., "altogether it cannot be compared with Mary's affection for only one soul."

The second motive of the love of this blessed Virgin for us is, that Jesus has given us to her in charge, in the person of St. John. The last words He addressed to her were, "Woman, behold thy son;" and who can say how deep must be the impression of the last words of a person so dear? Indeed, Mary loves us even because of, the immense price we cost her, as mothers have a particular tenderness for those children whose birth or preservation have caused them most pain. If, to evince the love of God the Father of men, it is said that He delivered up His own Son for them, may we not use the same terms to express the love of Mary? "Yes," says St. Bonaventure, "Mary has so loved us, that she has given us her only Son:" "She gave him to us," says F. Nieremberg, "when, in virtue of her jurisdiction over Him as Mother, she permitted Him to deliver Himself up to the Jews; she gave Him for us, when she silently listened to His accusers without saying a word in His defence, though there was every reason to believe that the advocacy of a Mother so wise and prudent would have made a strong impression, at least on Pilate, who was already conscious of the innocence of Jesus; in fine, she has given us this well-beloved Son a thousand times during the three hours she spent at the foot of the cross." SS. Anselm and Antoninus even assert that to accomplish the will of the eternal Father, she would, despite of natural tenderness, have immolated Him with her own hands. For if Abraham was so obedient, how much more so was Mary! But to return to our subject: what should be our gratitude to her for such a testimonial of love? God could, and did recompense Abraham's generosity, but what can men render Mary for immolating Jesus? "This love of Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "obliges us to show her an extreme love, being convinced that she loved us more than any other creature, as she sacrificed for us a Son who was infinitely dearer to her than herself."

The third and last motive of Mary's love for us, is, that we are the price of the blood of Jesus Christ. If an only son redeemed his servant by twenty years of slavery, would not his mother hold this slave in great esteem, seeing he had been so dearly bought? It is just so with Mary: her love and desire of man's salvation is proportioned to the price of the blood which purchased it. It was revealed to St. Elizabeth of Hungary that while the holy Virgin was yet in the temple, she ceased not to pray fervently for the coming of the Saviour of men. If our salvation were so near her heart, how much closer must it be, when she saw her Son, the eternal wisdom, make so much account of it?

It is because Jesus has redeemed all, that Mary loves and protects all. Albertus Magnus applies to her this text of wisdom, "I love those who love me." If she is so clement toward the ungrateful, what must be her tenderness for those who love her? "O how easy it is," says the same author, "to find Mary when one loves her!" "If Mary loves all," says St. Bernard, "she has a more than ordinary love for those who are devout to her." "The servants of Mary are not only loved but even served by her," writes another father. "Happy are those who love you, O Queen!" says Berchman of the Society of Jesus. "If I love Mary," continues he, "I am sure of obtaining perseverance and every grace I ask of God."

Children of Mary, though you love this admirable Mother as much as you can, yet she will still surpass you in tenderness. Love her as a St. Stanislaus Kotska, who could not speak of his love for her without communicating his ardors to his hearers; he who invented new names to honor her; who asked her blessing at the commencement of each action; who prayed to her as devoutly as if he saw her with his eyes; who was transported out of himself by the chant of the "*Salve Regina*;" who, when interrogated how much he loved Mary, answered, "Sure she is my Mother, and that is enough; you may guess the rest." He pronounced these words in such a manner that he seemed more like an angel sent from heaven to preach the love of Mary than a human being.

Love her as much as the blessed Herman Joseph, whom she honored with the name of her spouse; as much as a St. Philip Neri, who styled her "his delight;" as a St. Bernard, who denominated her "ravisher of hearts" (*raptrix cordium*); as a St. Aloysius, whose heart leaped, and whose cheeks glowed at the sole mention of her name; as a St. Francis Solano, who, in the holy folly of love, took an instrument of music and came to play and sing before an image of Mary; love her as much as a F. Diego Martinez, S. J., who, in recompense of his singular devotion to her, merited to be carried by the angels into heaven on all the feasts of the holy Virgin, that he might witness the glory and pomp by which the inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem solemnize them: he used to say, "I would wish to be possessed of the hearts of all the angels and saints, in order to love Mary as much as they love her; I would desire to have at my disposal the lives of men, that I might consecrate them to her service." Love Mary as a St. Bridget, who used to say that nothing in the world gave her so much satisfaction as to know that Mary was so loved by God, and that there was no torment to which she would not willingly expose herself for the preservation of the least degree of the glory she enjoyed.

Shall I say more? Let us imagine with ourselves, all that love can invent to testify its love; let us wish to give our life for the love of the

Queen of heaven ; as the blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez, let us engrave on our hearts the amiable name of Mary ; as did St. Radegonde, spouse of King Clotaire ; a Francis Binantius ; a Baptist Arquenta and an Augustin d'Espinosa, S. J. ; let us, in fine, exhaust all the inventions of love, yet, after all, we shall never be able to love Mary as she loves us ; we will still be obliged to confess with St. Peter Damian, "I know, blessed Mother, that it is impossible to exceed you in love." It is related of the blessed Alphonsus, before mentioned, that being one night prostrate before an image of the holy Virgin, he exclaimed in a transport of admiration, "My most amiable Mother, I know you love me, but not as much as I love you," whereupon this blessed Virgin, seemingly offended, said, "What dost thou say, Alphonsus ? Know that thy love is as remote from mine as heaven is from earth."

With good reason does St. Bonaventure say, "Happy are the true lovers and faithful servants of Mary, since, like our Lord Jesus Christ, she will not let any one exceed her in love. May my heart, then, do I say with St. Anselm, burn with love for you, Jesus my Saviour, and Mary my tender Mother ; may I, through your merits, love you as much as I can love you. Can you refuse me this grace, O divine lover of our souls, who died even for your enemies ?"

Example.

We read, in the life of Sister Catherine of St. Augustine, that in the town where her monastery was situated there dwelt a woman named Mary, who, from her infancy, led a very irregular life ; she was not corrected by time, but continued the same vicious course, until, disgusted with her wickedness, they drove her from the city, and confined her in a cave in the suburbs. There, eaten up by a frightful disease, which caused her flesh to fall in pieces, she soon died, without spiritual or corporeal aid. This death was regarded as a just punishment from the hands of God, and undeserving of the ordinary rites of burial, so the poor corpse was interred in some highway or common, like a beast of the field. Sister Catherine, who was in the pious custom of praying for all who she learned departed this life, thought not of recommending this old sinner to God, supposing her to be lost forever. It happened about four years after this woman's death that Sister Catherine being one day in prayer, a soul from purgatory appeared to her and said, "Sister Catherine, how unfortunate, am I not ? You pray for everyone, but you never pray for me." "Who are you ?" said the religious. "I am," replied the soul, "that poor Mary that died in the cave." "What," said Catherine with amazement, "is it possible that you are saved ?" "I am, indeed," replied the soul, "through the charity of the blessed Virgin Mary. In my last moments, abandoned

by all, and seeing myself loaded with sins, I addressed this prayer to the Mother of God: 'O thou, the refuge of the forsaken, have pity on me. Hope of the universe, my only hope, come to my assistance.' This little supplication was not made in vain. Mary obtained me the grace of true contrition, by means of which I escaped hell. She, moreover, procured me the abridgment of my torments in purgatory, the divine justice, at her suit, causing me to suffer in intensity what I should suffer in duration. A few masses would now release me: cause them to be offered for me, and I promise not to forget you in heaven." Sister Catherine lost no time in complying with this request, and, some days after, the soul of Mary again appeared, shining like the sun, and testifying her gratitude. "Paradise is opened at length to me," said she; "I am now going there to celebrate the mercies of my God, and be assured, Sister Catherine, I shall not forget to pray for you."

Prayer.

O Domina qui rapis corda (O you who win all hearts, my Mistress), do I say with St. Bonaventure, win my poor heart, which desires to love you. No, like your devout servant, John Berchman, I am determined not to rest until I obtain of God a tender, faithful and constant love for you, my sweet Mother, who even loved me when I was ungrateful to you. *Non quiescam donec habuero tenerum amorem erga Matrem meam Mariam.*

4—MARY IS THE REFUGE OF REPENTANT SINNERS.

Mary declared to St. Bridget that she is not only the Mother of the just, but even of sinners, if they have but a will to amend. When a sinner comes to throw himself at her feet, with a firm resolution of changing his life, she receives him more affectionately than his natural mother could do. But he who aspires to be a child of Mary should instantly renounce sin; this is a necessary condition to be recognized by her. Richard of St. Lawrence, on these words of the prophet, "*Surrexerunt filii ejus*" (risen are her sons), remarks that it is first said, "*surrexerunt*" (they are risen), afterward "*filii ejus*" (her sons), to show that one cannot be a child of Mary until he is first risen from his sins. He is unworthy of being a child of Mary, who is buried in sin. To do the things that displease her Son is to renounce her. "The children of Mary," adds he, "should imitate her in chastity, humility, sweetness, and mercy." A certain sinner said once to this blessed Virgin, "*Monstra te esse Matrem*" (show yourself a Mother), to which she replied, "*Monstra te esse filium*" (show that you are a son). Another sinner having invoked her as Mother of mercy, she answered, "You sinners in your wants call me Mother of mercy, but by your sins you render me also Mother of sorrows" (*Male-*

dictus a Deo qui exasperat matrem suam) ; that is, according to the above author, he is cursed by God who, by his wickedness and obstinacy, afflicts Mary, his tender Mother ; I say, by his obstinacy, for if he be willing to return to God, and has recourse to Mary, she will obtain his reconciliation. St. Bridget heard Jesus say to His blessed Mother, “ You offer your hand to those who wish to amend their lives ; there is no one sent from you without consolation.”

It is deemed heresy by the Council of Trent to assert that prayers and good works performed in sin are but so many new sins.

Although prayer in the mouth of a sinner may not be so excellent, because it is unaccompanied by charity, it is, nevertheless, useful and salutary, being fit to obtain pardon for sin, and grace to rise from it ; the efficacy of the petition, as St. Thomas teaches, being founded not on the merits of him who prays, but on the goodness of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, who assures us that all we ask in His name shall be granted. It is just the same with our petition made in the name of His most holy Mother. “ If he who prays merits not to be heard, the merits of Mary will pray for him,” says St. Anselm, exhorting all sinners to address themselves confidently to the Mother of God ; St. Bernard says, “ that the graces they are unworthy of obtaining are given to Mary, that they may receive them through her.” “ If a mother,” he continues, “ who has two sons learns that a mortal enmity subsists between them, what will she not do to reconcile them to each other ? Now, Mary is at the same time Mother of Jesus and Mother of sinners ; when she sees that sin has destroyed the love that united them, she leaves nothing undone to reunite them. All she requires of the sinner is, that he recommend himself to her, and have a will to be converted ; then, though he were sullied with all crimes, she disdains not to touch his wounds, and effect their cure.”

It would even seem that Mary considers the evils of those who wish to be converted as her own. When the Canaanean prayed for her daughter, the terms she used seemed to imply that she herself was the sufferer. “ Lord, have pity on me,” said she, and why, but because mothers feel the evils of their children as deeply as their own ? Thus it is that Mary exclaims, in behalf of the sinful soul, “ *Miserere mei* ” (have pity on me). And O would to God that all sinners might recur to this tender Mother ! there is not among them even one who would not obtain her favor. “ Mary,” cries out St. Bonaventure with admiration, “ you throw open your arms, and clasp to your maternal heart the sinner, abandoned by all.” In effect, when he is an object of hatred and aversion to the whole universe, and the fire, the air, the earth, the water—all creatures—would wish to revenge upon him the insulted Majesty of their almighty Creator,

Mary is his refuge ; she receives him into her bosom, and never rests until she reconciles him with his God.

We read in the second book of Kings, that a woman of Thecura (and she is praised for her wisdom), having once presented herself before David said, " My lord, I had two sons : both quarreled, and one of them killed the other. The officers of justice have seized on the former, and, after having lost one, I see myself on the point of losing the other ; have pity on me, and do not permit them to take his life." David, greatly affected, caused the aggressor to be set at large. This is precisely Mary's language to the sovereign Judge, when she sees Him irritated against sinners, who fly to her for protection. " Lord," does she say, like Thecura, " I had two sons, Jesus and man. Man nailed Jesus to the cross : His blood loudly demands your vengeance ; can you deprive me of the second, after I have already lost the first ?" Ah, no, certainly God will nor condemn the sinner who has recourse to Mary. Having given her to him for Mother, He is quite willing she should exercise the duties of a parent, and this she does with a goodness, fidelity, and love that cannot be expressed. Let every sinner, then, address himself to this blessed Virgin in those words of St. Bonaventure ; " O my Mother and patroness, my sins render me unworthy of approaching you. I should expect nothing but chastisement from your hands, but though you were to deprive me even of life, I cannot doubt of your will to save me. I place in you all my confidence, and provided I may be happy enough to die before your image, and implore your mercy, I shall firmly hope to join in heaven that innumerable multitude who have been saved by your intercession."

Example.

About the beginning of the seventeenth century there lived at Paris a most holy priest, named Father Bernard. He was of distinguished birth, but, despising all its advantages, he embraced so far the poverty of Jesus Christ, in the ecclesiastical state, that he was generally called the " Poor priest." He might be numbered with the most faithful servants of Mary. He believed himself indebted to her for his vocation, and lost no opportunity of inspiring others with the sentiments of respect and confidence which he felt for her ; his exhortations, in fact, were but a tissue of wonders effected by the blessed Virgin's intercession. He always styled her his good Mother, and caused to be printed, in every language, the prayer of St. Bernard, which begins " *Memorare, O piissima Virgo Maria*" (remember, O most pious and clement Virgin), which he had learned from his father during his life. Father Bernard distributed more than 200,000 copies of this little prayer ; by the bare recital of which he performed most striking miracles. As he was one day going to his little chatelet

(for with the exception of Friday, which was reserved for the Hotel Dieu, he spent all his time in visiting the prisons of Paris : Monday at the great chatelet ; Tuesday at the little chatelet ; Wednesday at the conciergeri ; Thursday at the Galeriens, and Saturday at Fort l'Eveque) for the discharge of his ordinary functions, he met on the Petit Pont (Little Bridge) two religious of a very strict order ; running to the younger, he embraced him saying, "Rejoice, my dear brother, for you will owe your salvation to the blessed Virgin." The young religious, who had no knowledge of him, took him to be a fool, but his companion said he was a holy man, called F. Bernard, and that he ought to rejoice, for what he told him was not without mystery. They then proceeded on their way, and F. Bernard went to the chatelet. Several years after, entering, one day, the same prison, he was told that a prisoner, who had just then been condemned to the torture, could not be induced to make his confession. Doubly afflicted at this news, he went to the dungeon where the culprit was confined. After embracing him he exhorted him to be reconciled with God ; he menaced him with his wrath, he threatened him with His vengeance, but all in vain—the criminal would not even answer him. The good father then begged him at least to recite a short prayer to the blessed Virgin, the "*Memorare*." With great difficulty he prevailed on him to do so, and, wonderful to relate, he had no sooner pronounced the first words, than he found himself quite changed ; a torrent of tears flowed from his eyes, and regret for his sins caused him to send forth sighs that seemed to rend his very heart. Transported with joy, Father Bernard embraced him, saying, "Your conversion, my dear brother, is the work of the blessed Virgin." "True, my father," replied the prisoner, with a voice half broken with sorrow, "it is a long time since you told me so ; would to God that I had never forgotten it." "What !" said Father Bernard, "have I ever seen you before, my child ?" (for he remembered nothing of him). "Alas, father !" said the prisoner, "I am that religious whom you formerly embraced on the Petit Pont." "But how came it to pass," inquired the father, "that you fell into this misfortune ?" "Ah, father," said he, "I embraced the religious state without a vocation ; I abandoned it, after having worn the habit for some years, and returned to my friends. These received me coldly ; every day I met some new subject of chagrin, so that in a fit of desperation I associated with a troop of banditti. I lived with these some time, but heaven, weary of my crimes, has at length delivered me to the arm of the law, and I am condemned to expire on the wheel. But I am still happy, if by this torment I can avoid the flames of hell." Here his sighs increased to such a height that Father Bernard, greatly affected, said, "Be consoled, my child ; since the holy Virgin has obtained for you the grace of true contrition, she will obtain

your salvation. Prepare to make your confession at once: I will go and bring a confessor to you." Father Bernard departed, and before he returned, the poor penitent breathed his last with gratitude and contrition.

Prayer.

O worthy Mother of God! how dare a sinner, so unworthy as I, appear before you? I am the last of sinners; I have offended the divine Majesty more than any other; since I cannot recall the past, help me to amend the present. "Have pity on me, O Jesus, my Redeemer. Holy Mother of God, implore Him for me. If you do not wish to hear my prayer, say in whom else I can place more confidence, or to whom should I go to find more mercy?"—*St. Anselm.*

CHAPTER II.

“*Vita Dulcedo*” (Our Life ! Our Sweetness !).

I—MARY IS OUR LIFE, SINCE SHE OBTAINS US THE PARDON OF OUR SINS.

TO understand well why the Church styles Mary our *life*, we should know that grace is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body, and that the blessed Virgin, in obtaining sinners the grace of conversion, restores them to this life. The Church puts in her mouth these words of the Proverbs: “Those who find me shall find grace, and he who finds me shall find life and salvation.” And commenting on this last passage, St. Bonaventure exclaims: “Hearken, all ye who desire the kingdom of God ; honor the holy Virgin, and you shall find life and salvation.”

St. Bernardine of Sienna asserts that if God has not destroyed man after his sin, it was in consideration of the blessed Virgin, and out of the singular love He bore her ; he even doubts not that all the mercies granted to sinners in the old law have been given in consideration of Mary.

With good reason does St. Bernard exhort us to seek grace through her, since she has found the grace which we have lost. “*Ne timeas invenisti gratiam*” (Fear not, for you have found grace), said the angel to her. But how can we say that Mary has found grace, she who, in her conception, was full of grace, and continued in it as long as she abode on earth? One is only said to “find” that which he possessed not before. “It is for sinners,” says Cardinal Hugo, “that Mary has found grace, which they had irretrievably lost. Hence, let them come,” he continues, “and say to her with confidence, ‘render us what belongs to us.’” The blessed Virgin herself in a verse of the Canticles says, “that she has been established by God for our defence. ‘I am like a wall, and my bosom is a strong tower,’ and hence it has been given me to appease the Lord.” Commenting on this, St. Bernard takes occasion to encourage the sinner. “Go,” does he say to him, “go to find the Mother of mercy ; discover to her the wounds of thy soul, and Mary, showing to her Son the breasts whence He drew life and nourishment, will mollify His anger, and appease His wrath.” This is what our holy mother the Church alludes to

when she asks the Lord to bestow on us the powerful assistance of Mary, that we may be delivered from our iniquities.

She is justly compared to the aurora, "because," says Pope Innocent, "as this star is the termination of the night, and the commencement of the day, thus Mary's appearance announced to the world the end of the night of sin and the dawning of the day of grace." And this effect, which the birth of Mary produced, is every day produced anew in the souls of the faithful. Scarcely does anyone begin to honor her, than he is already rescued from the obscurity of sin and conducted to the bright path of salvation. "Hence," cries out St. Germanus, "O Mother of God, he who pronounces your name with devotion has life already, or is on the point of receiving it."

"All nations shall call me blessed," says this august spouse of the Most High, in her sublime canticle. "Yes, my sovereign," says St. Bernard, "all generations shall call you blessed, because it is by you your servants obtain the life of grace, and the gift of glory; through you it is that sinners obtain pardon, and the just, perseverance."

"Be not discouraged, sinners," says the pious Bernardine of Bastia; "though your sins were beyond number, recur to this more than magnificent Queen; her hands are full of mercy; she is more anxious to bestow her favors than you are to receive them."

St. Andrew of Crete styles Mary "the guarantee of pardon, and the pledge of reconciliation" (*Fidejussio divinarum reconciliationum quæ datuo pignore fit*), and this because sinners have in her an assurance of forgiveness. The Lord Himself has given them a pledge thereof in rendering her intercession all-powerful. An angel told St. Bridget that the prophets of the ancient law leaped for joy, when they foresaw that, in consideration of Mary's purity and humility, God would be appeased and turn away His wrath from those who had most irritated Him. She is that privileged ark, where all who shelter themselves are saved from external shipwreck; and as the ark of Noah not only preserved man, but even irrational creatures, thus Mary, the ark of the new covenant, indiscriminately saves the just; that is to say, rational beings and sinners, figured by creatures void of intelligence. Our Lady one day appeared to St. Gertrude, covered with a mantle, under which, as if in a place of refuge, were a troop of ferocious beasts, as lions, tigers, bears and leopards. She was so far from driving them away, that, on the contrary, she patted them with her hand, and received them with great pity and commiseration. By this vision, the saint understood that the greatest sinners, when they recur to Mary, are safe from eternal destruction. Let us, then, enter this ark; let us conceal ourselves under the mantle of Mary; we there shall find life and salvation.

Example.

Father Bovius relates that a woman of bad life, named Helen, having by chance heard a sermon on the devotion of the rosary, immediately purchased a copy, unknown to any one, and began to recite it, not, indeed, through devotion, but she found in it such satisfaction, that she was never tired repeating it. By this good custom, she in time began to conceive a horror of her past life, so that her conscience gave her no repose. Compelled in some manner to have recourse to the sacrament of penance, she made her confession with such marks of contrition that the confessor was amazed. The confession being finished, having cast herself at the altar of the holy Virgin to thank her and recite the rosary, our Lady spoke to her thus: "Helen, you have sufficiently offended my Son and me: change your life and I will share my graces with you." Full of confusion, the poor penitent said, "Alas, holy Virgin! it is true I have been a monster of iniquity, but your power is great; help me to amend. I give myself to you, and resolve to spend the rest of my life in doing penance." In those sentiments Helen distributed all she possessed to the poor, and embraced a most austere life. Temptations the most frightful assailed her, but Mary procured her a complete victory over them. She was favored by many supernatural graces; as visions, revelations, and even with the gift of prophecy in the course of her life; and some time before her death, of which she was advised from heaven, the Mother of God came to visit her, in company with her Son, and her soul was seen ascending to the realms of bliss in the shape of a white dove.—*Example of the holy Virgin's patronage.*

Prayer.

O Mother of my God, you, whom the Church styles the refuge of sinners, behold me at your feet, imploring your compassion. Be moved at my miseries, I conjure you, by the inestimable price of our redemption and in the name of all it has cost your Son to rescue us from the captivity of the devil. I offer you all this Man-God has suffered from the moment of His incarnation in your chaste womb until that of His death on the cross, the poverty and humiliation of His birth, the inconveniences of His flight into Egypt, the fatigues, labors and contradictions of His life, all the pains of His soul, and torments of His body, during His passion; the treason of Judas, the ingratitude of the Jews, the flight of the Apostles, the grief your affliction caused Him, blessed Mother; the contempt, the blows, the whips, the thorns, the nails, the cross, the effusion of all His blood, and entreat you by the love you bear this divine Son, and in consideration of all He has endured, to extend a protecting hand

to a criminal who has deserved the fire of hell, and draw him from the abyss of sin.

2—MARY, AGAIN, IS OUR LIFE, BECAUSE SHE OBTAINS US PERSEVERANCE.

Final perseverance is so great a gift, that we cannot, as the Council of Trent teaches, merit it by any exertion of ours: "However," says St. Augustin, "it is given to those who ask;" "and provided," teaches Father Suarez, "that we persevere in demanding it, we are sure of being heard." Now if (as I hold for certain, according to the common opinion of divines), if, I say, every grace we receive passes through the hands of Mary, it is certain that this of final perseverance is also her gift. She herself promises this grace to all her faithful servants: "They who work with me shall not sin; they who make me known will have life everlasting." To preserve the life of grace we stand in need of spiritual strength, which will enable us to withstand all the attacks of our enemies; and this strength is only obtained by Mary—"Mine is strength; by me kings reign." "Strength is my portion," says Mary; "God has imparted it to me, in order that I may bestow it on my servants. It is by me they govern their senses and rule over their passions, that they may render themselves worthy of reigning eternally in heaven."

Mary is that tower, whence, it is said in the Canticles, a thousand bucklers are suspended with all the arms of the valiant men. To all her servants who have recourse to her in their combats, she is, as it were, an impregnable tower, fortified with arms of every description, to enable them to fight against hell.

It is for this same reason the holy Virgin is likened to a plane-tree: "*Quasi platanus exaltata sum*;" "the leaf of this tree," remarks Cardinal Hugo, "has the form of a shield;" thus Mary is the shield of all who place themselves under her protection. The blessed Amedée explains this name of plane-tree, given to the blessed Virgin, after another manner. "As the plane-tree," says he, "by its foliage shelters travelers against the chilling blast and the burning sun, thus men find under the mantle of Mary a secure retreat against the heat of the passions and the force of temptations."

Poor souls, what are you thinking of when you abandon Mary, when you cease crying to her for protection? "Take away the sun," says St. Bernard, "and what does the world become? An abode of horror, a chaos of confusion; thus let a soul abandon Mary, and she is seated in darkness, that darkness which the Holy Spirit says, 'favors the passage of the beasts of the forest.'" "Woe to him," says St. Anselm, "who despises the light of this sun, that is, who neglects Mary; it is soon night with him, and his soul becomes a haunt of sin and of devils." St. Fran-

cis Borgia doubted, and with reason, of the perseverance of such as had not a special devotion to Mary. Inquiring, one day, of the novices, to which saint each one was most devoted, he perceived that some among them were wanting in devotion to the blessed Virgin, whereupon he notified the master of novices, and desired him to have a particular watch on these young people. The event justified the saint's fears; all those who had not honored Mary lost the grace of their vocation and quitted the society.

St. Germanus had reason to call Mary "The respiration of Christians;" for as the body cannot exist without breathing, so the soul cannot live without recurring to the Mother of God. The blessed Alain, being once assailed by violent temptations, was on the point of yielding for want of recommending himself to Mary. Being always devout to her, this holy Virgin appeared suddenly, and, striking him on the cheek, said, "If thou hadst invoked me, Alain, thou wouldst not be now in this imminent danger."

"Happy is the man who hears my voice," says the Queen of heaven, "who rises early to seek me, and who watches at the door of my mercy." Yes, Mary will obtain for such a person strength to rise from his sin and light to walk in the way of perfection. Hence it is, according to the beautiful expression of Innocent III., that she is called *Luna in nocte, Aurora in diluculo, Sol in die*: moon for him who is in the night of sin; Aurora, morning star, for him, who, already enlightened, is trying to advance in his course; sun, in fine, for him who is confirmed in grace, that he may fall no more over the precipice.

Theologians apply to Mary these words of Ecclesiasticus, "Her chains are chains of salvation." "What are these chains," says St. Laurence Justinian, "but the fetters with which Mary binds her servants, that they may not escape from her service?" St. Bonaventure gives a similar explanation to those words which occur in the office of the holy Virgin, "My abode is in the full assembly of the saints," for he says that "not only is Mary established in the plenitude of charity, but that she therein retains the saints."

Of her servants it is said, "They are doubly clothed." This double garment, according to the interpretation of Cornelius a Lapide, are her own virtues and those of her Son; with these she covers her faithful servants, that, provided against the cold blast of sin, they may persevere to the end. Hence St. Philip Neri used to say to his penitents, "My children, if you wish to persevere, be devout to Mary." The venerable Berchman, S. J., said, also, "That he who loves Mary will persevere to the end." And Abbot Rupert draws from the parable of the prodigal a very ingenious reflection to the same effect. "If this libertine child," said he, "had

his Mother, he would never have abandoned his paternal home, or he would have returned sooner." Thus, he who has Mary for Mother, never abandons God, or if he does, he soon seeks Him again.

Oh, if all men loved this most merciful Mother, and had recourse to her in the hour of temptation, we would seldom see any one lost or suffer shipwreck. We fall, and we are lost, when we fail to invoke her assistance. St. Laurence Justinian applies to the blessed Virgin these words of Ecclesiasticus—"I walked on the waves of the sea;" for he makes her say, "I walked on the waves of the sea with my servants, in order to save them from a melancholy shipwreck."

St. Thomas Villanova says, "When the birds of prey (meaning the devils) pounce on us, let us imitate the chickens, who, when the hawk appears, fly for refuge under the wings of their mother; let us fly to Mary, without losing a moment, and she will secure us in her maternal bosom. O Mary," continues the saint, addressing the Queen of heaven, "it is for you to defend us, since you, after God, are our refuge, our protectress, our sweetest hope." We shall conclude with the words of St. Bernard: "Christian, whoever thou art, thy life on earth is a perilous navigation. If thou dost not wish to be drowned, turn not away thy eyes from this brilliant star; look up at the star of mariners; invoke Mary in occasions of sin, in the struggle of temptation, in doubt; in the midst of danger call Mary to thy aid; let her powerful name be ever in thy heart and on thy lips, to inspire thee with confidence; trust in Mary, and thou wilt not fall into despair; follow her, and thou wilt not stray; let her hand protect thee, and thou wilt have nothing to fear; let her be thy guide, and thou wilt infallibly arrive at the haven of salvation. *Sic fac et vivis* (This do, and thou shalt live).

Example.

In the lives of the fathers of the desert, we read that Mary, surnamed "of Egypt," at the age of twelve years, through a spirit of licentiousness, fled from her paternal home, and came to Alexandria, where her debaucheries were the scandal of the inhabitants. After sixteen years spent in crimes and disorders, she one day took a fancy to embark with some pilgrims who were going to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of the exaltation of the holy cross. When she had arrived in the city, a pure sentiment of curiosity led her to the church of the solemnity; but as she was going to enter, she found herself repulsed by an invisible hand. Again and again she tried to mingle in the throng, but in vain—she was not able to pass the threshold. Struck by the event, the poor sinner entered into herself, and being suddenly illumined from on high, she felt that God refused her admission to His house, because of her wickedness. At this

moment, happening to raise her eyes, she perceived, painted on the wall of the church, an image of the holy Virgin ; she prostrated herself before it, and, bursting into tears, said in her heart, " O Mother of my God, have pity on a miserable creature ; as you are the refuge of sinners, do not refuse me the consolation of seeing and adoring that sacred wood on which my Saviour, your Son, has shed His blood to redeem me : after doing so. I promise you to go wherever you please, to weep and bewail, the rest of my life, the follies and disorders of my ill-spent youth." After saying this, she felt an interior assurance that she could now enter, whereupon she tried, and, finding no opposition, she paid her homage to the sacred instrument of redemption, with great sorrow and compunction. On coming out, she again went to the holy image, saying " O Mother of God, my protectress, what shall I do ? Whither do you wish me to go ? " On which a voice answered, " Go beyond the Jordan, and thou shalt find thy place of abode." The poor sinful Mary then made a general confession of her whole life ; and after having received the holy Communion, bent her course, as directed by the holy Virgin, to the place of her penance. During the first seventeen years she spent in this place, she had combats the most violent to sustain against the enemy ; her only shield was to invoke Mary, and by this simple means she remained victorious, and spent the last thirty years of her life in great peace and tranquillity. The year before she died, by a particular disposition of divine providence, she was discovered by Abbot Zozyms, a holy solitary, who had gone into the desert to spend the Lent in greater solitude. After relating her history to him, she begged that when he came next, he would bring her the holy Communion. He did so, and, when separating, she invited him to return, the following Lent, to the spot where he had first seen her ; but what was his astonishment to find her dead, and her body environed with celestial light. These words were written near her, in the sand : " Abbot Zozyms, bury here the body of poor Mary, the sinner, and pray for the repose of her soul." Having interred the sacred remains, he returned to his monastery, and related to his brethren the wonders of the divine mercies toward this happy penitent.

Prayer.

O holy Virgin, deign to manifest your generosity toward me, a miserable sinner. If you grant me your aid, what can I fear ? No, I shall no longer apprehend either my sins, since you can repair them, or the devils, since you are more powerful than hell—or your Son, justly irritated, since one word from you will appease Him. I shall only fear for myself, and that, forgetting to invoke you, I may be lost. But this will not be the case. I promise you to-day to recur to you in all my wants,

and that during life, and at my death, your name and remembrance shall be the delight of my soul. Amen.

3—MARY RENDERS DEATH SWEET TO HER SERVANTS.

Dulcedo (Our Sweetness).

“He that is a friend loveth at all times, and a brother is proved in time of need.” True friends and devoted parents are known rather in adversity than in prosperity. False ones are most assiduous when fortune smiles, but if we fall into disgrace, if we are sick, and, above all, when we are dying, they forsake us. Mary never treats her servants thus; she has never abandoned her friends in their misfortunes, still less in the agonies of death, the greatest misery incident to humanity; she is our life in the place of our exile; she is our sweetness at the hour of death, in rendering this dread moment happy and serene; since that eventful day, when this blessed Virgin had both the grief and consolation to assist her Son, the chief of the predestined, at His last hour, she has been deputed to assist His members when in like circumstances, and hence the Church says, “Pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death.” What dire anguish fills poor dying creatures, when remorse of conscience, a fear of the divine judgment and an uncertainty of their salvation, combine to torment them. Hell, which then “has but a little time,” redoubles its rage, and makes one desperate effort to seize that prey of which it has been always in quest, and which is now going to escape it. To this last combat the devil, who has ever been setting snares for the soul, comes not alone; he brings with him innumerable legions of wicked spirits; witness what we read of St. Andrew Avellinus. During his agony he had so terrible a combat to sustain against them that all the religious who attended him were seized with fear and consternation. The countenance of the saint became livid; he trembled all over; he gnashed his teeth, and tears flowed in abundance from his eyes. Such a spectacle caused all the assistants to weep; each one trembled for himself, seeing a saint die in such a manner; one thing alone consoled them—it was, that the dying person often turned his eyes toward a picture of the holy Virgin, to implore her aid, as it were, and remembering to have heard him say more than once during life that Mary would be his refuge at the hour of death. Nor was he disappointed; his agitations soon ceased, his countenance resumed its wonted calm; keeping his eyes still fastened to the image of his protectress, he bent his head in token of gratitude, and sweetly rendered up his soul into her hands. It is supposed she then manifested herself to him, and conducted him to heaven. It is certain, at least, that a Capuchin nun, who was just then at the point of death,

turning toward the religious who assisted her, said, "Recite the 'Ave Maria,' for a saint ascends just now into heaven."

Oh, how these rebellious spirits fly at the sight of our Queen! If Mary be at our side, what can all the powers of hell avail against us? David, reflecting on this formidable moment, says, "If I shall walk in the shades of death, thy rod and thy staff shall uphold me." Cardinal Hugo says, "that by the staff we are to understand the cross of Jesus, and by the rod, the intercession of Mary, who is the rod of the root of Jesus." "The divine Mary," writes St. Peter Damian, "is that powerful rod which puts to flight all the infernal host." When F. Emanuel Padial, S. J., was on his death-bed, Mary appeared, and spoke to him these consoling words: "The hour is at length come in which the angels, rejoicing with thee, are going to exclaim, 'O happy labors, O mortifications abundantly recompensed!'" At the same time a troop of infernal spirits were heard to exclaim: "Alas, we can do nothing against this man, because she who is without stain protects him."

St. Bonaventure says, "that Mary sends the blessed spirits with the Archangel Michael at their head, to the succor of the faithful in their last hour, that they may protect against their enemies and conduct to heaven such as have been faithful in invoking her during life."

"When a man is at the point of death, all hell is in commotion," says the Prophet Isaias, "and raises up against him the giants, that is, the most formidable demons, in order that they may seduce his soul into sin, and afterward accuse it, when it shall be presented before the tribunal of Jesus Christ; but if this soul be defended by Mary, the devils will not dare to accuse it, because they know the sovereign Judge has never condemned any of those who were protected by His Mother."

St. Jerome assures the virgin Eustochium, in his epistle, that Mary, not content with assisting her servants at their last hour, comes also to meet them, and presents them herself before the judgment-seat; this agrees with what she herself taught St. Bridget; speaking of those who have been devoted to her during life, "My well-beloved daughter," said she, "I, as their Mistress and Mother, go to meet my servants, in order to be their strength and consolation." A son of this great saint, named Charles, happily experienced this truth; he had embraced the dangerous profession of arms, and, dying on the field of battle, his mother never ceased to sigh and weep before God, fearing for his eternal salvation; until the holy Virgin, compassionating the afflicted mother, revealed to her that she had assisted her son in his last moments, and that he was saved in consequence of his devotion to her; afterward St. Bridget saw Jesus Christ on His throne, and the devil presenting Him two accusations against the holy Virgin; the one was, that she hindered him from tempt-

ing Prince Charles, at his death, and the other, that she had carried his soul to judgment, without giving him time to assert his claims to it. Jesus Christ then chased away the infernal fiend, and Charles was carried into heaven.

“Her bonds are the bonds of salvation;” in the last hour, you will find rest in her. Oh, dear Christian, what shall be your joy at the last hour, if you have lived in the sweet service of Mary! Happy chains! precious slavery! which will infuse into your soul a sweet calm, the foretaste of eternal peace. F. Suarez, S. J., a great servant of Mary, was so replenished with consolation at his last hour, that he exclaimed, “No, I never could believe it was so sweet to die.” You, too, will experience a like sentiment, if you shall have loved this good Mother; she is faithful to her children, when they have been faithful to her; and when they have venerated her through life, in visiting her churches, reciting her rosary, fasting in her honor, and, above all, in uniting to these pious practices a homage much more agreeable, which is to thank her for her benefits, and to render themselves more and more worthy of her powerful protection.

Though you may have hitherto lived in sin, you will not be deprived of this consolation, if to-day you begin to change your life, and enter into the service of the Queen of heaven. The brother of St. Peter Damian is an example of this truth: this man, whose name was Martin, had the misfortune to commit a most grievous sin; entering into himself, prostrated before an altar of the holy Virgin to bewail his fate, he repeated this prayer: “O my patroness, mirror of chastity, I have, by my impurity, sinned against God, and against thee; miserable wretch that I am, I have no other resource but to make myself thy slave; deign to accept me in that quality;” then taking off his cincture, he placed it round his neck in token of slavery. In a short time after he died. During his illness, he one morning said to his attendants, “Rise, rise, salute my mistress;” then he added, “from whence comes this favor, O Queen of heaven, that you condescend to visit your poor slave?” At that moment Peter, his brother, having entered the room, he related to him how the blessed Virgin had visited him, and complained that his servants remained sitting in presence of the Queen of heaven; shortly after, he peacefully slept in the Lord.

But if, in this dread moment, my dear reader, your past sins come to trouble you, and cast you into despair, Mary will come to reanimate your confidence, as she did to Adolphus, count of Alsace. This good man, who quitted the honors of the world to embrace the humiliations of the cross in the order of St. Francis, was very devout to Mary. In his last illness, the recollection of the life he had lived in the world made him greatly apprehend the divine judgments, and tremble for his salvation; till **Mary,**

who never sleeps in the necessities of her servants, suddenly presented herself before him, and addressed him in these consoling words, "Adolphus, my dear Adolphus, thou art devout to me, and dost thou fear death?" Their effect was most powerful; all apprehension immediately ceased, and Adolphus expired in the greatest peace and confidence.

Although we are sinners, let us animate our confidence, since Mary will not forget us at our last hour. She once told St. Matilda that she never absented herself from the deathbed of such as had served her faithfully during life; we would never finish, if we recounted all the examples we have of this truth: we shall content ourselves with the following:

Example.

When St. Dominic labored in Carcaissone, against the Albigensian heresy, they brought him one possessed, to be exorcised, whence he took occasion to make the devil confess, by the mouth of him whom he possessed, a truth that cannot be too often inculcated, to excite all to confidence in the Mother of God; for, forced by the command of the saint, the enemy said, in the presence of an immense concourse of persons who ran to the spectacle, that she upset his designs, and rendered his measures abortive; that she every hour snatched souls from him (this he thought himself assured of); that several at the hour of death obtained salvation by her intercession, and, in fine, that not one of those who faithfully served her had ever been lost.

Thus did the force of truth compel even the father of lies to testify this for our instruction and consolation.—*True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin.*

Prayer.

O my tender Mother, what shall be the end of the miserable sinner that is before you? When I think of the terrible moment at which I shall have to render to God an account of my conduct, and when I remember how often I have, by my sins, written the sentence of my own condemnation, fear penetrates my bowels, and dries up the very marrow of my bones. O consolation of the afflicted, have pity on me; remorse of conscience gnaws me, my best actions are but imperfectly performed; hell waits to carry off my soul. Divine justice must be satisfied: what, then, shall become of me? What shall be my eternal lot? Alas, without you I am lost; obtain for me a true sorrow for my sins, grace to amend and persevere during life, but above all, in the agonies of death. Mary, my hope henceforth more than ever, do not abandon me, but support my confidence lest I fall into despair. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

Spes nostra Salve (Hail our Hope).

I—MARY IS THE HOPE OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF ADAM.

HERETICS cannot bear to hear us style Mary our hope ; they pretend that we cannot hope but in God alone, from this text of Scripture, "Cursed is the man that trusts in man." "Mary," say they, "is a creature, and how can a creature be our hope?" Thus heretics argue ; but in spite of their accusations, the Church wishes that priests and religious, in the name of all the faithful, should every day raise their voice, and invoke Mary under that title so sweet, "Hope of Christians."

St. Thomas, the angel of the schools, teaches that we can hope in a person after two different ways ; either as a principal or intermediate cause. When one solicits a favor from a king, though it is expected from him because the only dispenser, it is hoped from his minister as an intercessor or mediator ; undoubtedly it is the king who bestows the favor, but he does so at the prayer of his favorite ; and the suppliant has reason to say that he hopes in the minister who presents his suit. Now the King of heaven, whose bounty is infinite, desiring nothing so ardently as to confer His favors on us, in order to increase our confidence in Him, has given us His Mother for our Mother, and in her hands resigned (if we might say so) His omnipotence in the sphere of grace, that we might place in her the hope of our salvation, and all the help necessary to attain it. Those, indeed, are cursed by God who hope in the creature without reference to God, as certain sinners do who think nothing of forfeiting the friendship of the Most High for that of man ; but those are blessed, truly blessed, who hope in Mary as being the Mother of God ; He Himself being pleased in seeing this blessed woman honored, from whom alone He has received more glory than from all men and angels together.

Mary is our hope, since, as Cardinal Bellermino says, "we may hope to obtain by her intercession what we could not flatter ourselves to obtain by our own prayers ;" "and to recur to the holy Virgin in this hope," says St. Anselm, "is not to distrust the divine mercy, but to fear our own unworthiness."

With reason, then, does the Church style Mary, "Mother of holy hope;" it suits her admirably, since it is not the vain hope of perishable, passing goods she creates in us, but the blessed hope of eternal treasures. "I salute you, hope of my soul," says St. Ephrem to this blessed Mother; "I salute you, the protectress of sinners, the rampart of Christians, and the salvation of the world." The same saint, considering that by an admirable disposition of His providence, God has willed that all who are saved may be saved by means of Mary, says to her, "Queen of heaven, never cease to protect us, since, next to God, you are our only hope."

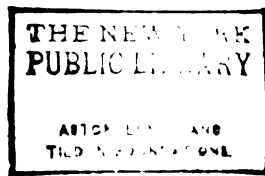
God commanded Moses to make the propitiatory of most pure gold, because it was from thence He wished to speak to him. A learned writer says, that "Mary is the propitiatory of the Christian people, whence our Lord gives them answers of pardon and forgiveness, and dispenses to them His gifts and graces." "Why," asks St. Irenæus, "was not the mystery of the incarnation accomplished without the consent of the Virgin? It is," he replies, "because God wishes she may be the principal of all good in the law of grace." "O Mary," exclaims the devout Blossius, "who could avoid loving you? you who are our light in the obscurity of doubt, our consolation in grief, and our hope in danger. Hail! hope of those who have no resource! Hail! you to whom the Son of God has given such influence that whatever you wish is executed instantly."

St. Germanus also recognizes Mary as the source of all good, the deliverance from all evil. "O my sovereign," says he to her, "you who are my guide in the pilgrimage of this world, the strength of my weakness, the riches of my misery, the balm of my wounds, the soother of my pains, the deliverance from my bonds, hear the humble prayers of your servant; be moved by his tears, O my patroness! my refuge, my life, my hope, my salvation, my support."

St. Antoninus applies to the holy Virgin these words of Solomon, "All good things come to me with her." All good comes to us with Mary; he who has found her has found all graces, all virtues, since there is no good which he does not obtain through her intercession. She herself warns us that she has at her disposal all the treasures of the Divinity; "With me are glory and riches that I may enrich them that love me;" hence St. Bonaventure wishes us ever to keep our eyes on the hands of Mary, to receive from them all that is necessary for our true welfare. Oh, how many proud have found humility by their devotion to Mary! How many choleric have found sweetness! How many blind have found light, how many desperate have obtained salvation! The pious Lanspergins represents to us Jesus Christ thus addressing all men: "Children of Adam, who abide among such powerful enemies, and are subject to such woes, honor my Mother and yours: I have given her to



THE GLORIES OF MARY.



the world as an example, as an impregnable fortress, that you may learn from her all the virtues, and that she may be your asylum in all tribulations."

O my God, what amiable confidence does not St. Bonaventure manifest in Jesus our Redeemer, and Mary our advocate! "Although our Lord had withdrawn Himself from me," he says, "knowing that He is found by him who seeks, I would continue to search after Him, and when I found Him, I would not suffer Him to depart until He gave me His benediction. I shall enter into the precious caverns of His wounds, and there conceal myself from His fury; but if my Saviour drive me off because of my sins, I shall go and cast myself at the feet of His Mother; thence I shall not rise until she has obtained my pardon, for she does not know what it is to be insensible to the voice of misery, and her pity will soften the anger of her Son. Regard us, then, O Mary, most merciful, for we, your servants, place all our hope in you."

Example.

Tancred, a great favorite of the Emperor Frederic II., considering the many dangers to which his salvation was exposed in the world, had recourse to the holy Virgin, that she might point out to him in what state of life he could with most facility save his soul, and at the same time dispose himself to be faithful to the call of God; he now approached oftener the holy sacraments, prayed more, performed more good works, and, in fine, omitted nothing to know the divine will. After some time, the holy Virgin appeared and said to him, "Tancred, you ask me to teach you to what state God calls you; I have heard your prayer; go and enter my order and you will find what you desire." Tancred lost no time in following his vocation. He at once renounced his honors and distinctions, and, having embraced the order of St. Dominic, lived and died holily therein.

Prayer.

O Mother of holy love, as your divine Son has established you, next to Him, "Our advocate with the Father," and given such efficacy to your prayers that nothing is refused to them, I recur to you, hope of the miserable; my confidence in you is so great that if my salvation was in my hands, I would place it in yours, for I depend more on your protection and your mercy, than in all my works. He who is protected by you cannot be lost; heaven and earth confess it. Hence, though all creatures forget me, though the whole world abandon me, provided you forsake me not, I should think myself secure. I hope, I trust, I confide in you, holy Virgin; thus I desire to live, thus I wish to die, saying, in heart and

mouth, "*Unica spes mea Jesus: et post Jesum Virgo Maria*" (Jesus is my only hope, and after Him, you, O Virgin Mary).

2—MARY IS THE HOPE OF THE SINNER.

God, having created the heavens and the earth, made two great luminaries, the sun to rule the day, the moon to preside over the night. "The former," says Hugo, "is a figure of Jesus Christ, whose splendid rays illumine the just who live in the day of grace; the latter is typical of Mary, whose mild lustre illumines sinners amid the dreary night of sin." "It is toward this propitious orb," says Innocent III., "that he who is buried in the shades of iniquity should look." Having lost divine grace, the day disappears; there is no more sun for him, but the moon is still in the horizon; let him address himself to Mary; under her influence thousands every day find their way to God.

Among all the titles under which the holy Church wishes the faithful to honor the Mother of God, one of the most consoling for us is that of "the refuge of sinners." In the law of Moses there were some cities, into which, if certain criminals fled, they were screened from the pursuit of justice; now, in the law of grace, there is one sole city of refuge, of which "great things have been said," but there is this difference, that whereas the Jewish cities only afforded refuge to certain persons, Mary, the city of God, is open to all sinners; all crimes are therein pardoned.

He who finds admittance into this city needs say nothing in order to be saved. "Haste, let us enter into the place, and there we shall keep silence." "This stronghold," says Albertus Magnus, "is the sacred Virgin established in grace and glory." Once introduced to her, let us be silent, for it does not become us to open our mouth before the Lord, whom we have so much offended, but leave Mary to speak and intercede for us. Hence it is that another pious author, exhorting sinners, says, "Children of Adam, go and conceal yourselves in the bosom of your Mother, the new Eve. This is your city of refuge, your only hope." Is it not to this city David alludes, when he says in the Psalms, "The Lord has protected me in introducing me to the secret of his sanctuary"? What is this temple of the Lord if it is not Mary?—a living tabernacle, whose builder and maker is God, into which no one enters, save He Himself, to operate the great mysteries of salvation. St. Ephrem salutes Mary as the asylum of sinners, which is not shut either day or night; and the great St. Basil likens her to one of the hospitals which charity rears for suffering indigence, where all are welcomed without exception; and as those who suffer most have the best right to be admitted to such places, he who is most destitute of the gifts of grace, and most overwhelmed by the evils of the soul, should say to Mary, "Great Queen, you are the salvation of poor, infirm

creatures, and hence no one has a stronger claim on your mercies than I have."

In the revelations of St. Bridget, this blessed Virgin is called the star which precedes the sun : this intimates that when a soul begins to feel devotion to her, God will enrich her with His grace. The glorious St. Bonaventure, to animate our confidence in Mary, represents to us a raging sea, in which sinners, already fallen from the vessel of divine grace, are tossed about by the billows of temptation, torn by the gnawings of remorse, and horrified by the terrors of divine justice, without light or guide, and ready to be swallowed up in the gulf of despair ; but just then the Lord shows them Mary, the star of the sea, and seems to say to them, "Sinners, unfortunate sinners, despair not ; fix your eyes on this brilliant luminary ; its lustre will save you from the tempest, and conduct you to the port of salvation." Blossius figures Mary to us as the only refuge of those that have incurred the divine indignation, and the asylum of all in affliction or temptation, as the well-beloved of the Most High, whom He has rendered so sweet, so mild, so amiable, that no one fears to approach her ; "she is," says he, "Mother of mercy, sweet and mild, not only to the just, but to sinners ; she despises, she rejects none ; her unspeakable sweetness is the bait she uses to take sinners, and when they are caught, she fashions them with her own hands from the kingdom of heaven."

The prophet complained, in his day, that no creature was to be found who could appease the wrath of God. "Lord," said he, "we have sinned, and there is none to restrain your arm from falling heavy upon us ;" but now Mary presents herself between God and His offending creatures ; "And no person is so fit," says St. Bonaventure, "to avert the sword of divine wrath and indignation." Richard of St. Lawrence also observes on this subject, that, "In the old law, God often complained that there was none to interpose between Him and sinners ; but since Mary, the mediatrix of peace, has appeared on earth, she restrains His arm, and averts His wrath."

St. Basil, encouraging sinners, says to them, "Do not fear, but in all your necessities seek Mary ; call her to your aid, and invoke her power, for by divine appointment she is a universal succor." The Mother of mercy has such a desire to save poor creatures, that she herself goes to seek them, and when she has found them, she well knows how to render them agreeable to God.

We said before that the ark of Noah, which has been the refuge of all beasts, however wild and ferocious, was a figure of Mary, since she is the asylum of all sinners, however wicked and disorderly ; "but," says a learned author, "there is this difference : the ark of Noah did not change the animals who were received into it. The tiger and the wolf came forth

as untamable as they entered ; whereas, under the mantle of Mary, the wolf becomes a lamb, and the tiger is changed into a dove."

As Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Noemi, found so great favor with Booz that he permitted her to collect the sheaves which fell from his reapers, thus Mary has found such grace before the Lord, that He has appointed her to gather up the blades which resist or escape the evangelical scythe of the preachers and missionaries who labor to fill His granaries. There are some souls so rebellious, that it is impossible to convert them by any efforts on the part of God's ministers : it is left to Mary alone to save them by her powerful intercession. But woe to the sheaves which would escape the hands of this amiable gleaner ! they shall in time be gathered up and cast into the eternal flames.

The saints and fathers seem to vie with each other in seeking to make sinners comprehend what a refuge they have in Mary. St. Laurence Justinian calls her "The hope of the guilty" (*spes delinquentium*) ; St. John Damascene, "The hope of the desponding ;" St. Augustin, "The only hope of sinners" (*unica spes peccatorum*) ; St. Ephrem, "The surest port of the shipwrecked, the protectress of those who have a foot in the abyss ;" St. Bernard, "The ladder of sinners (*scala peccatorum*), by which they ascend to God ;" St. John Chrysostom, in fine, addressing her in the name of all sinners, says, "Hail Mother of God, our Mother also ; heaven where God makes His abode ! Throne, whence the Lord dispenses His favors ! intercede with Jesus for us, that by your prayers we may obtain pardon here, and eternal salvation hereafter."

Example.

One of the most distinguished preachers of the last century was once called about midnight to administer the last sacraments to a young nobleman, who had just been seized with apoplexy. When he arrived he found the house all in confusion, the wife distracted, and the physicians vainly employing all the resources of their art on an invalid with no more than the semblance of life. This was the state of things during the night ; when day appeared, the churches being opened, the priest went to offer a votive Mass of the holy Virgin for the sick person in the next chapel ; and glory forever be to God and His blessed Mother ! it was scarcely finished when a servant came to tell him that his master had now the use of his faculties. The surprise of this good priest was greatly increased when, on revisiting the gentleman, who had been too well known by his scandals and debaucheries, he found him penetrated with the liveliest sorrow and compunction, imploring pardon of God, more by tears than words, and offering his life for the expiation of his sins. In these dispositions he made his confession, and received the last sacra-

ments. The confessor, edified and amazed at such a change, when all was over asked the dying person if he had any idea of the cause of such a miracle of the divine mercy in his favor. "Alas! father," he replied, "what other cause could there be but this—divine mercy itself, moved by your prayers, and perhaps by those of my deceased mother?"

"This good woman was a model of piety to the court and to the city. I was her only son; after being married but a few years, her husband died, and, unfortunately for me, she survived him but a few months. When on her death-bed she caused me to be brought to her, and spoke nearly in the following words: 'I leave you, my son, an illustrious name, and riches in abundance, but I entreat you to prefer to both the sacred character of Christian; you are exposed to great dangers, my child; to what jeopardy, perhaps, will not your best possessions expose you? I die, alas, too soon for you, but may the will of God be accomplished! I leave you under the protection of the holy Virgin, and entreat her to show herself your Mother. If you, my child, wish to give your affectionate parent some mark of attachment and recollection, promise me the only thing I am going to ask of you—it will cost you little—it is to recite the rosary of the blessed Virgin every day.' I promised her most readily," said the invalid, "and never failed to keep my word, amid all my debaucheries—nay, I confess that for the last ten years it is the only act of religion I have performed."

The confessor now saw clearly that the conversion of this young man was owing to the special protection of Mary. He exhorted him to redouble his confidence in his powerful benefactress. He did not leave him until his death. He received his last sighs, which were poured forth in the same penitential spirit.

Prayer.

O purest of Virgins, I venerate your most holy heart, which is the delight of the Lord, the sanctuary of purity and humility, the abode of divine love. My heart, which I present to you, is of clay; sin has therein made most dreadful wounds: Mother of mercy cure it, sanctify it; refuse not your pity to him for whom Jesus has not refused His blood.

CHAPTER IV.

‘Ad te clamamus, exules filii Hevæ’ (To thee we cry, poor banished sons of Eve).

I—MARY’S READINESS TO ASSIST THOSE WHO INVOKE HER.

UNFORTUNATE children of an unfortunate mother, guilty of the same fault, and condemned to the same punishment, we wander in this vale of tears, exiled from our country, and bending under the weight of afflictions, grief of mind, and evils of soul and body. Happy is he who, amid all these miseries, often turns his eyes toward Mary, the refuge of the miserable. The Church assiduously instructs her children in their duty to this tender Mother. She has, established throughout the year, a number of festivals in her honor; she has, consecrated to her, one day in the week; she has declared that ecclesiastics and religious should every day salute her in the name of all Christians, and she wishes that the faithful themselves may give her daily proofs of their respect and love. In all public calamities this holy Church recurs to Mary, by prayers, novenas, processions, visits to her altars, etc. And Mary is pleased with this homage; not that she needs it, for it is infinitely below her worth, but because, by our increased devotion and confidence, she is enabled to do more for us. St. Bonaventure says that “Ruth is a figure of Mary,” for the name of Ruth signifies “seeing and hastening,” and this blessed Virgin, seeing our miseries, hastens to succor and relieve them; her desire to do us good suffers her not to delay, and this Mother of mercy, being most lavish of her gifts, pours them upon us with the utmost profusion. Richard of St. Lawrence assures us that “the compassion of Mary extends to all who solicit it, even though it be only by a simple *‘Ave Maria.’*” Novarin asserts that “Mary not only runs, but even flies to assist us. She is that woman in the Apocalypse, to whom two wings were given, like those of the eagle, to fly to the desert.” Ribera says that “These wings signify the ardent love by which Mary is elevated to God.” But the holy Amadée gives an explanation more suitable to our subject; he says that “The eagle’s wings signify the rapid flight with which Mary comes to help her children.” When she went to visit Elizabeth, carrying into her family all the benedictions of heaven, she made the journey promptly. “Mary went with haste,” says the gospel; it is not said she returned with haste. Well, then, does St. Bonaventure style her the “Salvation of all who invoke her.”

I again affirm that the enormity of our sins should not diminish our confidence in Mary, for as a tender mother has no horror of cleansing the leprosy of her son, thus, whatever be the evils of our souls, Mary will not be deterred from curing them. She proved this to St. Gertrude, when she appeared to her, extending her mantle over all who came to her. It was then revealed to this great servant of God that the angels preserved the servants of Mary from the pestilential breath of hell.

This blessed Mother's compassion is so great, her tenderness is so lively, that she does not wait till we invoke her. "Mary," says St. Anselm, "prevents those who desire her protection, and obtains graces for them before they ask them." Of this we have a strong proof at the marriage of Cana. Mary no sooner perceived that the wine failed, than, without waiting to be asked, she relieved the embarrassment of the parties by drawing a supply from the omnipotence of her Son.

Will any Christian, then, doubt the veracity of these words of St. Bernard to the holy Virgin? "O Mary," said he, "I consent that every tongue may be silent in your praise, if anyone ever invoked you in vain."

Holy Virgin, who ever recurred in vain to your powerful protection? Heaven and earth will sooner be destroyed than you will cease to help those who humbly invoke you. St. Anselm, to increase our confidence in Mary, assures us that our prayers will often be more speedily heard in invoking her name than in calling on that of Jesus Christ; and the reason he gives is, that Jesus, being no less our Judge than our Saviour, He must avenge the wrongs we do Him by our sins, while the holy Virgin, being solely our advocate, is obliged to entertain only sentiments of pity for us. We are far from insinuating, nevertheless, that she is more powerful than her Son. Jesus Christ is our only Mediator; He alone has obtained our reconciliation with God, His Father, but as, in recurring to Him whom we must necessarily consider a judge who will punish the ungrateful, it is probable a sentiment of fear may lessen the confidence necessary for being heard, it would seem that in applying to Mary whose office is that of mercy, our hope would be so strong as to obtain all we ask for.

How is it, that whereas we ask many things of God without obtaining them, we no sooner ask through Mary, than they are granted us? "It is not, indeed," says Nicephorus, "that she is more powerful than the Lord, but He has thus decreed to honor His Mother."

St. Bridget says she "one day heard the divine infant, Jesus, promise the holy Virgin that all who asked grace through her, would be most assuredly heard." Another time, our blessed Lord said to Mary, in the presence of St. Gertrude, "I know that in virtue of my omnipotence, I have invested you with power to deal out mercy in such a manner as you find good to all sinners who invoke you."

Let each one of us, then, say to Mary, with St. Bernard, "Remember, O most clement Virgin, that no one has ever yet invoked you in vain: do not permit that I may be the first to be excluded from your pity," etc. (*Memorare, O piissima, etc.*)

Example.

St. Francis de Sales experienced in the most signal manner the efficacy of this prayer, "*Memorare,*" etc. At the age of seventeen years, being a student at Paris, he was afflicted by a violent temptation to despair. To try his virtue, and to render him more worthy of divine favors, God permitted the devil to persuade the holy student that all he did for eternity was useless and unavailing, for that his reprobation was resolved upon. Thus tormented, and without any relish for a sentiment of God, Francis lost his appetite, sleep fled from his eyes, and his health began to decline perceptibly. Sometimes his mental agonies made him speak thus: "I shall be eternally deprived of the friendship of my God, with whom I hitherto enjoyed the sweetest intercourse. O Love! O Beauty! to whom I would willingly consecrate all my affections, I must now only behold you in your rigors. O Virgin, Mother of God! the most beautiful of the daughters of the celestial Sion, I shall never see the place of your abode and triumph. Ah, if I am not destined to behold the beauty of your countenance, do not permit, at least, that I be condemned to blaspheme you forever in hell."

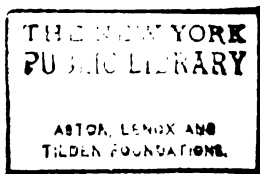
In this distressed state, Francis remained about a month, when it pleased our divine Jesus, who never abandons His servants, to deliver him from it by the agency of His blessed Mother, under whose auspices the the saint had already made a vow of perpetual chastity. Returning home one night, he chanced to enter a church on the way, and seeing there a tablet appended to the wall, on which was written the "*Memorare,*" etc., he prostrated himself before the altar of the Mother of God, recited this prayer, renewed his vow of chastity, and promised to recite the rosary every day in her honor. "O my sovereign," said he to her, "be my advocate with your Son: I dare not recur to Him. If I am unfortunately destined not to love Him in the next world, obtain, at least, that my heart may beat only for Him while here on earth." This prayer was followed by an act of confidence in the divine mercy, and submission to the divine will. He was not long without receiving its happy fruits; peace soon returned to his disconsolate heart, and he again resumed his wonted vigor. In gratitude to the blessed Virgin he was ever after specially devout to her, and ever sought to make others so, by his sermons and writings.



THE BROTHERS OF ST. PETER DAMIAN.

ST. DOMINIC AND ONE POSSESSED.

MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN.
Vol. III.—161.



Prayer.

O Mother of God, hope of mankind, one of the strayed sheep, whom the eternal Word came to seek on earth, demands entrance again into His blessed fold. The price of its admittance is already paid, viz., all the blood of His veins, one drop of which would suffice to cancel the sins of ten thousand worlds. No more is necessary than to apply to my soul the merits of this redeeming stream, and that is your province, holy Virgin: dispensatrix of the divine grace, you save, through God's permission, whom you please; to you, then, I commit myself, that the enemy may not destroy me.

2—THE POWER OF MARY TO DEFEND THOSE WHO INVOKE HER IN
TEMPTATIONS.

Mary, Queen of heaven, is also Queen of hell; the devils themselves bend under the yoke of her sovereignty; for, from the beginning, the Lord said she should crush the serpent's head. "I will place," said He to him, "a mortal enmity between thee and the woman." Yes, this woman, who was so long promised, was no other than Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who, by her purity and humility, brought Satan's pride to nought. St. Cyprian observes, on this passage of Genesis, that "God does not speak in the present tense, but in the future. He does not say to the serpent, 'I *put* enmity between thee and the woman,' but 'I *will put* enmity.' This," says the saint, "is to prove that it was not of Eve He spoke, who was then living, but of another woman of her race, and who was to procure even a greater good to mankind than had been lost by the first sin." Some doubt if these words of Genesis, "*Ipsa conteret caput tuum*" (she shall crush thy head), relate to the holy Virgin or to Jesus Christ; for the Septuagint translates it *ipse* (he); but our Vulgate, which is the only translation approved of by the Council of Trent, has it *ipsa* (she); and it is thus St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom understood it. But in whatever manner we explain this text, whether that the Son may have vanquished by the Mother, or the Mother by the Son, it is certain that Mary has overcome the proud spirit, and, like slaves captured in war, he ever since groans under the yoke of heaven. If Eve entailed on us darkness and death, Mary brought us life and light: the one suffered herself to be conquered by the devil; the other vanquished him, and bound him up in such a manner that he can no more hurt her servants.

It is said of the strong woman in the Proverbs, "The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall not want spoils." Richard of St. Lawrence beautifully explains this passage in reference to the holy Virgin.

“The heart of the man of God,” says he, “trusts in Mary; he shall not want spoils, for she has snatched from hell its prey, to enrich with spoils our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The palm is the symbol of victory, and it is said of our blessed Queen that before all the princes of the people she governs as a beautiful palm-tree, because of the victory those gain who place themselves under her protection. “My children,” says she, “when the enemy attacks you, look on me; take courage, for in acting thus you are sure of victory.” Recourse to Mary is an assured means to overcome temptations; “for,” says St. Bernardine of Sienna, “she is mistress of the devils;” she is against them as an army ranged for battle; this army is made up of her virtues, her power, her mercy, her goodness, her prayers, which, as an experienced commandress, she disposes for the confusion of her enemies, and the safety of her friends. “I, like the vine, have brought forth fruits of sweet odor,” says Mary, in Ecclesiasticus. “As serpents,” says St. Bernard, “flee from the vine when in blossom, so the devils are obliged to quit those happy souls who diffuse the good odor of devotion to Mary.” Mary is also likened to the cedar in Scripture. “I am exalted as a cedar in Libanus,” not only because the wood of this tree, being incorruptible, is symbolic of Mary’s exemption from sin, “but also,” says Cardinal Hugo, “as the fragrance of the cedar puts venomous reptiles to flight, so the sanctity of Mary is the terror of the devils.”

In the old law, when the Jews went to battle, they carried with them the ark of the Lord, and raised it up in the sight of their enemies, in order that they might obtain victory. “When the ark was lifted up, Moses said, Arise O Lord, and let thy enemies be put to flight.” It was thus the walls of Jericho fell, and in the same manner the Philistines were defeated. Now the ark in which the manna was preserved was a figure of Mary, whose most pure womb was found worthy to enclose the manna of heaven, Jesus Christ, true God and true Man. It is through her that the Lord enables us, in the law of grace, to triumph over our spiritual enemies, and when this glorious ark of the new covenant was assumed into heaven, the infernal powers saw their lances broken, and their forces dispersed.

Oh, how formidable Mary is to the devil! like that enemy in Job, who profits by the midnight gloom to steal into a house, but who flies away with terror when the day appears. “Thus the infernal foe,” says St. Bonaventure, “penetrates into the soul in the darkness of ignorance, but when the grace and mercy of Mary illumine the horizon, then he flees horror-stricken into the bottom of the dark and dreary abyss.” “Such is the empire which our Lord has given Mary over these infernal fiends,” says St. Bridget’s revelations, “that if they attack a person, and he implore her

assistance, they fly away in fear and trembling, the torments of hell being a thousand times less painful to them than the effects of her power."

"As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among virgins," says the spouse in the Canticles. On this passage Cornelius a Lapide observes that "As the lily is an antidote against the sting of serpents, so the invocation of Mary is an excellent specific for all temptations, particularly those of the flesh, as several persons have happily experienced."

There is no servant of Mary who cannot say, with St. John Damascene, "O Mother of God, my hope in you renders me invincible; fortified by your protection, I shall pursue my enemies and gain a complete victory over them." We read in Exodus that our Lord conducted His people by a pillar of clouds during the day, and a column of fire during the night. This marvelous pillar was a figure of Mary and the double office she fulfills in our regard; a beneficent cloud, she intercepts the too ardent rays of the divine sun of justice; a terrible fire, she repels and keeps off the devils. "As wax melts before the fire," says St. Bonaventure, "the wicked spirits lose their energies in presence of souls truly devout to Mary;" and again, "The numerous squadrons of an enemy in the field are less feared by man than the powers of darkness apprehend the protection of Mary."

O glorious Virgin, it is not your protection alone—your very name causes hell to tremble. This formidable name is a thunderbolt to the devils; it is like the voice of thunder which strikes men with dismay, and deprives them of feeling.

Example.

There lived at Reisburg a canon regular, called Arnauld, who was extremely devout to the holy Virgin. When at the point of death, he devoutly received the last sacraments, and having caused his brother religious to be assembled, he prayed them not to abandon him in his last moments. Scarcely had he made this request, than it seemed he had some presentiment of what was to happen, for he began to tremble frightfully. A cold sweat and convulsive throbs sufficiently indicated what passed within him; but it was more manifest, when, in a faltering voice, he said to those present, "Do you not see those who surround and wish to carry me into hell? Brothers, invoke Mary for me; I have great confidence in her." The religious immediately began the litanies of the holy Virgin, but when they came to the words, "Holy Mary, pray for him," the dying man interrupted them by saying, "Repeat the name of Mary, for I am already before the judgment-seat of God." Then after a short pause, he said, as if replying to his accuser, "Yes, I have done that certainly, but I performed penance for it;" afterward, addressing the holy

Virgin, he said, "O Mary, I shall vanquish my enemies if you come to my aid." The night passed in these terrible assaults, to which he ceased not to oppose the crucifix and the holy name of Mary; but at break of day calm was restored, and Arnauld, with a serene countenance, manifested his transports, since Mary had obtained him eternal salvation. Then turning toward the holy Virgin, who invited him to follow her, "I come, my mistress," said he, and in his effort to rise he sweetly gave up the ghost, and followed Mary, as we trust, into the mansions of the blessed.

Prayer.

O Mary, my refuge, how often have I not rendered myself the slave of hell! You have broken my bonds, and snatched me from the hands of my enemies; but I dread falling again under their dominion, for they continually seek to carry off my soul, and flatter themselves it shall become their prey. Holy Virgin, defend me! Protected by you I am sure of victory, but grant that I may never forget to invoke you, especially during my last combat, the most terrible of all. Place, then, your holy name with that of your divine Son on my lips and in my heart, and grant that, expiring while invoking Jesus and Mary, I may find myself at thy feet in heaven. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

"Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lachrymarum valle" (To thee we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears).

I—NECESSITY OF MARY'S INTERCESSION, IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SALVATION.

T is an article of holy faith that the invocation of saints is not only a thing permitted, but that it is holy and useful to salvation. The Church has so declared, against heretics, who pretend that the worship of those holy persons was injurious to that of Jesus Christ. But if Jeremy, after his death, prayed for Jerusalem; if the elders in the Apocalypse present to God the prayers of the saints; if a St. Peter promised his disciples to remember them after his death; if a St. Stephen prayed for his persecutors, and a St. Paul for his companions in the apostleship, why should we not invoke the saints for obtaining divine grace and mercy?

Undoubtedly "The only mediator between God and man is Jesus Christ," who, by His merits, has reconciled us with His Father; but it would be impious to deny that God does not grant graces through the intercession of the saints, and especially through that of Mary, Queen of saints, so dear, so cherished by our Lord Jesus Christ. Do not the honors conferred on a mother reflect on her children? "Let no one think," says St. Bernard, "that the glory of Jesus Christ is diminished by increasing that of His Mother; for the honor of the Queen Mother reflects on the King her Son."

We, indeed, must be void of faith, if we doubt the utility of Mary's intercession in order to salvation, since her prayers are not only useful but necessary for this great end; not of an absolute necessity, it is true, but of a moral necessity, which has its source in the divine will. That God has constituted Mary the ordinary dispensatrix of his grace was the opinion of St. Bernard: it is now the common opinion of all theologians, and all doctors. It is taught by Tega, Mendoza, Poire, Pacciuchelli, Segneri, Crasset, and a crowd of others, Even F. Noel Alexander, so reserved in his propositions, says that "God wishes that all the favors men expect from Him they should be indebted for to the intercession of Mary."

This is also the opinion of Father Contenson; explaining the words of Jesus on the cross, "Behold thy Mother!" He makes Him say, "No one

shall be made participator in the merits of my blood but by the intercession of my Mother. My wounds are fountains of grace, but Mary is the canal through which they flow ; John, my disciple, the measure of my love for you will be proportioned to my love for her."

But this doctrine does not please a certain modern author ; this person, who otherwise speaks with much piety and learning of true and false devotion, is very parsimonious when there is question of the worship of the holy Virgin, refusing her that glory and those privileges which a St. Germanus, a St. Anselm, a St. John Damascene, a St. Bonaventure, a St. Antoninus, a St. Bernardine of Sienna, and innumerable other holy doctors, made no difficulty in granting her. He pretends that the aforesaid proposition, " God confers no grace but through Mary's intercession," is a hyperbole which fervor caused some saints to utter, and that it is only correct in this sense, that " Mary has given to the world Jesus, the author of grace ; for," adds he, " the apostle formally teaches that we acknowledge but one sole Mediator between God and man, viz., the Word made flesh."

But with his permission, I reply that the mediation of justice, in virtue of merits, is one thing, and that the mediation of grace by means of intercession is another. There is a great difference between asserting that God *cannot*, and that God *will not* grant us graces through the intercession of Mary. We recognize God as the source of all good ; we confess Him to be the absolute master of His gifts, and that Mary is only a mere creature, who is indebted to His pure bounty for all that she obtains.

The sentiment is by no means contrary to Catholic doctrine ; no, far from it ; the Church in her public service teaches us to recur to Mary under the titles of " Health of the sick ;" " Refuge of sinners ;" " Help of Christians." In her offices for the festivals of Mary she applies to her these words of Wisdom : " In me is all hope of life and virtue ;" again, " He who finds me shall find life, and obtain salvation from the Lord : they who work in me shall have life everlasting." Now, what do all those texts go to prove, but that the intercession of Mary is necessary for us ?

Such is the opinion held by most theologians, and confirmed by many fathers of the Church ; and it is neither respectful nor just to say, as this author has done, that they have dealt in hyperbole or exaggeration. The saints, inspired by the spirit of truth, are extremely cautious of exaggeration, which belongs to the father of liars. And here we shall take the liberty to say that when an opinion honorable to the holy Virgin is discussed—if this opinion be neither repugnant to faith, nor to the decisions of the Church, and if it has some foundation, some support—to reject, to combat it, merely because the other sentiment may be also true, demonstrates very little love or respect for the Mother of God.

We would not wish to imitate this conduct, neither would we desire our readers to do so ; on the contrary, we would have them firmly believe all that can be said without error of the glorious privileges of Mary ; and in this we imitate the Abbot Rupert, who placed among the homages most pleasing to the Mother of God that of believing in her grandeur. Though there was no other authority than that of St. Augustine, it should calm all fear of exceeding on this point. Now this holy doctor assures us that all we can say in praise of the holy Virgin is beneath what her eminent dignity deserves and requires. Does not the Church say in the Mass of the blessed Virgin, "You are happy, O holy Virgin, and most worthy of all praise" ?

But let us resume, and see what the saints write in support of our proposition. We read in St. Bernard that "God has filled Mary with all graces, that men may receive them by her as by a canal. Before the birth of this blessed Virgin," he adds, "mankind had not the abundant supply of graces which we have, because God had not yet built the aqueduct destined to convey its waters." As when Holophernes wished to destroy Bethulia, he commanded that the public fountains which supplied it with water should be diverted from their course, so, when the devil wishes to subdue a soul, he first endeavors to destroy its devotion to the Mother of God, that, the channel of grace once destroyed, it may with more facility fall under his yoke. "Consider, then, Christians," continues the saint, "how ardent, how tender should be your devotion to the Queen of heaven, since the Lord has placed her in the plentitude of all good gifts." As the moon, placed between the sun and the earth, renders the earth all it receives from the sun, so Mary, the beautiful moon in the order of grace, receives the influences of the divine Sun of justice, to communicate them to the inhabitants of our globe. She is the happy gate of heaven, for as the letters of grace, after receiving the king's signature, must necessarily pass through his palace gate, so no grace, no pardon, emanates from the throne of the King of kings, without passing through the hands of Mary (according to St. Bernard).

"Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "is called the Gate of heaven, because no one enters this blessed abode without first passing through her."

St. Jerome confirms our argument: he says that "The plentitude of grace is found in Jesus Christ, as in the head, whence it flows to Mary, who communicates it to all His members." St. Bernardine of Sienna explains this idea more clearly when he says that "As Christians are the mystical body of the Man-God, Jesus Christ, all the graces of the spiritual life which flow from the head are transmitted by Mary." St. Bonaventure says that "God, the source of all grace, having been pleased to dwell in the womb of the blessed Virgin, she has acquired a species of jurisdic-

tion over all graces, and that the floods of these celestial gifts issued from her virginal womb as from a divine ocean, when the eternal Word came forth therefrom."

F. Crasset explains in nearly the same sense this passage of Jeremy, where the prophet, perceiving through the vista of ages the incarnation of the divine Word, says, "That a woman should encompass a man." "As a line proceeding from the centre of a circle," says this father, "cannot go out from it without passing through the circumference, thus no grace can come to us from Jesus Christ, the centre of all good, without passing through Mary, who was the circumference, as it were, of this Man-God, while He was in her womb."

What do the fathers, the doctors of the Church, teach us, by texts so strong and so precise? Do they intend to prove that all graces come to us through Mary in this sense only—that she has given us the Author of grace, as our adversary would fain persuade us? Far from it. They, on the contrary, give clearly to understand that every grace given to man, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, is conveyed to him by the hands of Mary. This is the conclusion of the venerable F. Suarez, S. J. He writes, "It is now the general sentiment of the Church that the intercession of the Mother of God is not only useful but even necessary to salvation." "For the Lord," says St. Bernard, "wishes to grant us nothing without the agency of Mary." Before him, St. Idelphonsus said to the holy Virgin, "O glorious Lady, the Lord has confided to you all the gifts He wishes to dispense to His creatures; all the treasures of grace are committed to your care." St. Peter Damian goes still farther, asking himself this question: "Why has God, before He became incarnate in Mary's womb, applied for her consent?" "For two reasons," he replies; "first, to oblige us to be very grateful to her; and, second, to teach us that our salvation depends on the will of this blessed Virgin."

St. Bonaventure, on these words of Isaiah, "A rod shall come forth of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall bud out of its root," makes an ingenious reflection: "Whoever," says he, "desires the grace of the Holy Ghost, let him seek the flower on the stem—that is to say, let him go to Jesus by Mary; for the stem shall give us the flower, and by this flower we shall find God. Thou wishest to possess this flower? try to make its stem incline toward thee." The great St. Francis of Assisium, in his sermon on the Epiphany, remarks, on these words of the gospel for that feast, "They found the Child with Mary His Mother," that Jesus is never found but with Mary and by Mary; and he concludes that in vain is the divine infant sought if we seek Him not with His Mother. "I wish," says St. Ildephonsus, "to be the servant of Mary, that I may be the servant of her Son."

Example.

In the year 1683 the Turks, elated with their victories in Germany, formed the design of pushing their conquests beyond the Rhine, and, menacing all Christendom with destruction, came with an army of 200,000 men to besiege Vienna. The inhabitants, struck by the terror of their arms, fled on every side. The emperor himself, Leopold the First, not being in a condition of opposing the victorious Ottomans, was obliged to depart precipitately from the palace, and got out of the city at one side with all his family, at the moment the enemy laid siege to it on the other. On the vigil of the Assumption, the Turks opened the breach, and pushed forward with alarming rapidity. To increase the misfortune of the citizens, a church took fire, and the devouring element gained the arsenal; but by the visible protection of the holy Virgin, on the feast, the fire miraculously ceased, and afforded time for drawing from the magazine the necessary ammunition. So marked a protection of the Mother of God reanimated the courage of the besieged; neither the continual fire of the assailants, nor the bombs which threw down the houses, prevented them from imploring in the churches, night and day, the divine aid. The preachers ceased not exhorting them to confide in Mary, their powerful protectress. On August 31st the Turks had gained so far, that Vienna, the bulwark of Christendom, was almost entirely reduced to ashes, but on the Nativity of the holy Virgin, September 8th, the Christians, having redoubled their prayers, miraculously received notice of prompt assistance, and the second day in the octave of that feast the whole mountain of Kalemberg was seen covered with the troops of the great Sobieski, king of Poland. His army, it is true, was small, when compared with the Ottoman forces, but it was strong with the divine help. On September 12th, Sobieski, with Prince Charles of Lorraine, heard Mass in the chapel of St. Leopold: he himself served it, kneeling at the foot of the altar, with extended arms, except when the priest needed his ministry. Having communicated, and the sacrifice finished, he placed himself and his whole army under the protection of the Mother of God, and then, receiving the benediction given in the name of the Pope, this pious prince rose, and full of holy confidence, exclaimed, "Let us march, now, under the all-powerful protection of the Mother of God." When his little army beheld the numerous forces of the infidels, they felt that victory on their side should be miraculous. It indeed was so, for after the first shock, which was on their side a little violent, the khan of the Tartars fled; the grand vizier, foaming with rage, was drawn along by the torrent in spite of him, leaving in the field all his baggage, his ammunition, and his artillery, which amounted to one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, together with the great standard of Mahomet,

and ten thousand slain. After this signal victory, Sobieski and Emperor Leopold entered Vienna, and having proceeded to the church, the former intoned the "*Te Deum*." Thenceforward this religious prince caused to be carried with him a tablet of our Lady of Loretto, which had been found by miracle; two angels were represented thereon as placing a crown over the head of the holy Virgin, and each holding a parchment, on which was inscribed in Latin: "By this image of Mary, I, John, shall conquer." And we likewise, despite the fury of the enemies of our salvation, will be always victorious if we have recourse to the Queen of heaven.

Prayer.

Rejoice, oh, my soul, for the prospect Mary's intercession affords thee of being saved. O powerful Queen, from how many perils have you not delivered me! how many lights and graces have you not obtained me! How have I deserved that you should labor so ardently for my salvation? Ah, it is your clemency alone that has interested you in my favor, and if, in return for your gifts, I gave my blood and life, it would be nothing. As I can only offer you the weak tribute of my praise and love, deign, O most amiable Virgin, graciously to accept it.

2—CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT.

A man and woman having proved our destruction, it was befitting that another man and another woman should unite to save us. No doubt Jesus, the Man-God, alone sufficed to effect our redemption; but it was more convenient that, both sexes having concurred to our ruin, both should conspire to save us. Albertus Magnus styles Mary the "coadjutrix of our redemption;" and the holy Virgin herself told St. Bridget that as Adam and Eve had sold the world for an apple, thus she and her Son had redeemed it with one heart. God has been able to create the world, but He has not been pleased to redeem it without the coöperation of Mary.

"The blessed Virgin," says Father Suarez, "has concurred in three ways to our redemption: First, in meriting, by congruity, as theologians say, that the Word should become incarnate in her womb; second, by the continual prayers she offered to God for us, while on earth; third, by her consent that Jesus might sacrifice Himself for our redemption; and hence it is that the Lord, ever equitable in His decrees, has ordained that she should become for all the mediatrix of salvation."

Mary is called the coöperatrix of our justification, because God has confided to her care the graces He wishes to impart to us; "So that,"

says St. Bernard, "all who ever existed, or ever shall exist, should regard this blessed Virgin as the means of their salvation."

Jesus says in the gospel, "No one can come to me, if my Father does not draw him by his grace." He says also of Mary, "No one can come to me, if my Mother does not attract him by her prayers." When St. Elizabeth saw the holy Virgin enter, she exclaimed in her humility, "Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should visit me?" Here it might be asked, Did she not know that Jesus, also, was in her house, and why, then, should she not suppose herself as unworthy of seeing the Son as the Mother? But the saint well knew that when Mary comes, she always brings Jesus with her, so that it sufficed her to thank the Mother, without naming the Son.

"She is like a merchant's ship, carrying bread from afar," says the Holy Ghost of the valiant woman. Mary is this privileged vessel, who has brought us "Jesus Christ, the living bread descended from heaven." Those who are not in this vessel, that is, those whom Mary has not under her protection, will be infallibly swallowed up by the waves. When, therefore, the winds blow, and the floods of temptation rise, let us say to Mary what St. Peter said to Jesus Christ, "Save us or we perish." But here the above author will object that salvation can only come from God. Well, but let us ask him if a criminal, condemned to death, may yet ask some favorite of the king to save him by his intercession, why may not Christians implore the Mother of God, who I think has some influence with Him, to obtain their pardon? We hear St. John Damascene say to her, "Immaculate Virgin, deliver me from eternal damnation." And St. Bonaventure calls her "The salvation of those who invoke her." The Church also addresses her as "Health of the sick;" why, then, should Christians feel any scruple in saying to her with the Church and the saints, "Save us" ?*

But I shall adduce the testimony of other writers in support of our argument. The glorious St. Gatian affirms that "Though we may ask as many graces as we please, yet we cannot obtain them but through the intercession of Mary." St. Antoninus says that "To ask favors without interposing Mary is to attempt to fly without wings." As Pharaoh said to the Egyptians, when in want of bread, "Go to Joseph," so when we ask some grace of God, He says to us, "Go to Mary." "Christians," says Richard of St. Lawrence, "can say to Mary as the Egyptians to Joseph, 'Our salvation is in thy hands;'" and Cassian, that "The salvation of all men is in the protection of Mary."

As the rock, when it loses its support, rolls from precipice to precipice,

* "By this intercession" is always understood in this and similar prayers to the blessed Virgin.—
Trans.

till it falls into the abyss, so a soul who loses Mary's protection falls from one crime into another, until it is lodged in hell. "God will never save us," says St. Bonaventure, "without Mary's intercession." As a little infant cannot live without the care of a nurse, so no Christian can be saved except Mary protect him. Keep fast hold of her garment, therefore, little children of Jesus Christ, and never let it go until you receive her benediction in heaven. "Who could know God except by you, O holy Virgin?" says St. Germanus: "Who could be saved, O powerful Virgin, except by your intercession?" In another place he says, "If you, O blessed Virgin, did not point out the way, no one would escape the dangers to be met with therein." "As we have not access to the Father," says St. Bernard, "but by Jesus Christ, we have not access to Jesus Christ but through Mary, that this divine Saviour, whom she has given to the world, may receive us from her hands." "What shall become of us, what hope remains to us, O Mary," says St. Germanus, "if you abandon us, who are the life of Christians?"

"But if all graces come to us through Mary," say some, "it must follow that when we pray to the saints they should employ her mediation with God to obtain our requests, and this is what no person ever believed or advanced." For my part, I confess that this sentiment does not appear strange to me; what more natural than that the Lord, who has crowned His Mother Queen of saints, may wish that the saints recur to her intercession in favor of their clients? As to the objection that this opinion has never been supported, I say that St. Anselm, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, as well as F. Suarez and many others, maintained it. "In vain," says St. Bernard, "would a person ask some favor of the saints, if Mary did not endeavor to obtain it." It is in this sense that a modern author understands this verse of the 42d Psalm, "All the rich of the people entreat thy countenance." "The rich of the people," says he, "are the saints; when they wish to procure some favor for their suppliants, they address themselves to Mary." "We should entreat the great ones of the heavenly Jerusalem," says F. Suarez, "to be our intercessors with their mistress and Queen." "You alone, O Mary," says St. Anselm, "can do as much with God for us as all the saints together. How is that?" still demands the saint. "Because you are the Mother of our Saviour, and the spouse of the Holy Ghost, the Queen of heaven and earth: if you are silent, none will speak in our behalf; if you intercede for us, all in concert join in your petitions." "When Mary prays for a soul," says F. Segari, "all Paradise seconds her prayer, or rather, in her quality of Queen, she then commands the angels and saints to accompany her to the throne of God to join in her supplications."

O Mary, our faithful mediatrix! Virgin full of grace! Ladder of

Jacob! Gate of heaven! Treasury of divine grace! May all Christians honor you with all their hearts: and, to use the beautiful expression of St. Bernard, "cling to you with the utmost fidelity." Let us implore grace, but let us do so through you; in fine, let us present to God, through your sacred hands, all the prayers and good works in our power, if we desire that this our incense may be acceptable to the Lord.

Example.

The following story is related by Eustachius, patriarch of Constantinople, an eye-witness of the fact: it is confirmed by SS. Peter Damian, Bernard, Bonaventure, and many others. Theophilus, the subject of it, was archdeacon of the church of Adanas; his great virtues had acquired for him such esteem that the people wished to raise him to the episcopal chair, but his humility opposed it. It happened that some enemies of his charged him with a great crime, and, the calumny bearing all the resemblance of truth, his bishop in consequence deprived him of his charge. This so displeased Theophilus that for the recovery of his reputation he consulted a Hebrew magician, who placed him in communication with the devil, to be succored in his disgrace; the wicked spirit agreed to reestablish his ruined character, on condition that he would renounce Jesus and Mary, and give him in writing the act of renunciation, to which the unhappy man agreed. The following day the bishop was informed (no one knew how) that Theophilus had been calumniated; so, sending for him, he asked his pardon, and reinstated him in his dignity. But, struck with remorse at the remembrance of his perfidy, the archdeacon knew not what to do; at length he goes into a church, and seeing there an image of the holy Virgin, he said, "O Mother of God, I cannot abandon myself to despair, because you are my refuge, and your clemency is unbounded." For forty days he persevered in tears and prayers, reflecting on his sin in the bitterness of his soul: at the end of this term the Mother of Mercy appeared to him one night, and spoke in these words: "O Theophilus, what hast thou done? Thou hast renounced me and my Son, and given the pledge of thy apostasy to our mortal enemy." "My patroness," he replied, "I have been very wicked, it is true, but it belongs to you to obtain my pardon." Seeing his confidence, Mary then said, "Take courage; I will intercede for thee." Animated by this promise, Theophilus redoubled his prayers and austerities, remaining continually before this image of the holy Virgin, until she again appeared, and with a serene countenance said to him: "Rejoice, Theophilus; I have presented to God your sighs and prayers, and He has been pleased to grant your pardon." "But, my mistress," replied he, "the enemy has still in his possession the abominable act by which I renounced Jesus and

you: I shall never be easy until I get it again." Three days after, he found the paper lying on his breast on awaking; the following day he went to the church, and in the presence of all the assembly related the whole affair to the bishop, with many tears, and finished by consigning to him the act of renunciation. The bishop caused it to be burned before all the people; and all present celebrated together the praises of Jesus and Mary. Theophilus then returned to the church of the holy Virgin, and at the end of three days expired in the peace of the Lord.

Prayer.

Blessed Virgin, who in your double quality of Queen and Mother, dispense your favors with such magnificence and love, I, who am so poor in merit and virtue, and greatly indebted to the divine justice, humbly recommend myself to you; you have the keys of the divine mercy; draw on this inexhaustible treasure, and dispense its riches to this poor sinner, in proportion to his immense wants. Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

“*Eja, ergo, advocato nostra*” (Turn, then, most gracious advocate).

I—MARY IS A POWERFUL ADVOCATE.

MATERNAL authority is naturally so strong that a son, if he be a monarch, and possess most absolute sway over every individual in his dominions, cannot treat his mother as a subject. It is true that Jesus Christ, in virtue of the hypostatic union of the divine and human nature, possesses, even as man, supreme authority over all creatures, and even over Mary herself: yet it is not less true that during His mortal life He wished to be subject to her. St. Ambrose says, that “Jesus, having chosen Mary for His Mother, was obliged to be subject to her.” “We can say of the saints,” says Richard of St. Lawrence, “that God is with them, but to Mary it has been given, not only to conform herself to the will of God, but that God Himself has been conformed to hers; and while we say of virgins, that they follow the Lamb, we can say of Mary, on earth, that the Lamb followed her.”

Although the holy Virgin no longer commands her Son, yet her prayers, being the prayers of a Mother, never meet a refusal: hence St. Peter Damian says, “All power, O Mary, has been given you in heaven and on earth; nothing is impossible to you, for you can give hope to the desponding. When Mary,” he continues, “presents herself before Jesus, the altar of reconciliation, to mediate for us, she rather seems to dictate than to supplicate, and has more the air of a Queen than of a subject.”

Imperio Virginis omnia famulantur, etiam Deus (All is subject to Mary's empire, even God Himself), St. Bernardine of Sienna does not fear to assert: the saint wishes to insinuate thereby that God hears Mary's prayers as if they were commands. “The Lord, O Mary,” says St. Anselm, “has so exalted you that His favor has rendered you omnipotent.” “Yes,” says Richard of St. Lawrence, “Mary is omnipotent, for, according to all laws, the queen enjoys the same privileges as the king, and that power may be equal between the Son and Mother.” Jesus has rendered Mary omnipotent: the one is omnipotent by nature, and the other is omnipotent by grace; that is to say, as it was revealed to St. Bridget, Jesus has obliged Himself to grant all the desires and requests of His

blessed Mother, not willing to refuse her anything in heaven, since she had refused Him nothing on earth.

With great reason, then, O blessed Mother, do SS. Bernard and Anselm say that "It suffices, for the accomplishment of any work, that you desire it." Hence it is that you can raise the greatest sinner at pleasure to the most eminent sanctity, and that Albertus Magnus makes you say, "It suffices to entreat me to desire a thing, for whatsoever I wish is necessarily accomplished."

Considering this immense power of Mary, St. Peter Damian thus addresses her: "O holy Virgin, do not fail to plead our cause; be governed by your heart; exert for us your great influence, you who are as rich in mercy as in power."

While Mary abode on earth, nothing, after zeal for the divine glory, was nearer to her heart, nothing so occupied her mind, as to succor the unfortunate. That she even then enjoyed the privilege of obtaining what she wished we have a proof in the change of the water into wine at the marriage of Cana. Why does Jesus perform this miracle, since, in the divine councils, which are immutable, His "hour was not yet come"? It is because the decree which fixed this epoch was subject to another decree, by which from all eternity this Lord obliged Himself to grant the requests of His Mother; and Mary knew well the extent of her privilege. Hence, although Jesus appeared by these words, "My hour is not yet come," to reject her suit, she doubted not for an instant the grant thereof. "By saying 'My hour is not yet come,'" observes St. Thomas Aquinas, "Jesus wished only to insinuate that if anyone else besides His Mother asked Him, He would have deferred the miracle."

It is, indeed, a certain truth, that no creature can obtain for poor sinners so many, and such abundant graces, as our most clement advocate; for she is less regarded by the Lord as His servant than honored by Him as His Mother. The spouse in the Canticles says to his beloved: "You who dwell in the gardens, our friends are attentive to your voice; let me hear it." These friends are the saints, who, when they wish to obtain some favor for their suppliants, turn their eyes to the Queen, knowing that she needs only to let her voice be heard, and all their desires are granted.

We read in the history of Rome, that when Coriolanus besieged the Capitol, neither the prayers of the citizens nor the requests of his friends could soften him; but the moment his mother, Veturia, raised her voice, he laid down his arms and sacrificed his resentment. If a pagan showed such respect for his mother, what will not Jesus, the Man-God, evince for His Virgin Mother? Father Justin assures us that one sigh from Mary can do more for us with God than all the prayers of the saints united to-

gether ; the devil himself acknowledged the same to St. Dominic, by the mouth of a possessed person.

St. Germanus says to Mary, " You, O holy Virgin, have over God the authority of a Mother, and hence you obtain pardon for the most obdurate sinners." St. Bridget heard the saints say to Mary, " Queen of heaven, elect of the Lord, what is impossible to you ?" To this corresponds a celebrated adage of a certain father : " You, O holy Virgin, can effect by your prayers all that God can operate by His power." " What !" says St. Augustine—" is not the dignity of Jesus connected with the honor of His Mother ? Does He not assure us in the gospel, that He is come to fulfill the law, and not to destroy it ?" St. George, archbishop of Nicomedia, goes still farther ; he says that Jesus Christ has imposed a law upon Himself to grant the requests of His Mother, to satisfy His obligations to her for giving Him existence as man. Rejoice then, O Mary, since He who is liberal beyond measure toward us, to whom He owes nothing, considers himself indebted to you.

It is a reflection of St. Augustine that as Mary merited to give human flesh to the Son of God, and thereby prepared the price of our redemption, she is, consequently, more enabled to obtain our salvation than all the redeemed together. " You, then, can entirely save us, O Mary," says St. John Damascene to her, " for your authority of Mother gives an irresistible force to your prayers." O admirable goodness of our God, who to effect our future happiness has given us an advocate that gains every cause in which she pleads ! O ineffable mercy, who, lest we might be deterred from approaching, by reason of the formidable sentence He is to pronounce, has ordained that His Mother, the mistress of grace, should intercede for us !

Example.

Surius relates that it was through the holy Virgin the blest Elzear, count of Arrian, received his great spirit of prayer. " His governess, being a very pious woman," says this historian, " was anxious that her pupil should be so too ; hence she was desirous to see him pray devoutly, and continually asked this favor for him of God. One day at Mass, while recommending him earnestly to God, she heard a voice say to her that ' the Queen of heaven instructed him in the holy science of prayer.' Lest she might be deceived by the father of lies, she mentioned the circumstance to a holy priest, who at once examined the young count as to the method he followed in prayer. Elzear ingenuously said that he began his meditation by recommending himself to the holy Virgin, beseeching her to suggest to him the petitions, and to engrave in his soul the sentiments with which the Holy Ghost might inspire him ; that he then recited

the '*Ave Maria*,' and after this little tribute of homage to his blessed Mother, the time of prayer passed in pious thoughts and affections, without his ever experiencing dryness or disgust."

Behold an effectual means to learn the holy art of praying well.

Prayer.

O Mother of God, permit me to say to you with St. Bernard, "Speak, O my mistress, for your Son hears you." In taking flesh in your chaste womb, a God has been pleased to become your debtor, in order to place afterward at your disposal all the treasures of His unbounded mercy. All men, without exception, experience your clemency: if you heap benefits on those who outrage and dishonor you, what have not those who glory in being your servants reason to expect? We, holy Virgin, hope for grace and salvation from you, and since you need but say the word, ah, do so; you will be heard, and we shall be saved. Amen.

2—MARY IS A COMPASSIONATE ADVOCATE.

We have so many motives to love our great Queen, that if every sermon spoke of her, if all the earth resounded with her praises, if all men gave their life for her, it would be little in return for the tender affection she bears them, or to the obligations we have toward her. The blessed Raymond Jourdan, who through humility called himself the Idiot, said of Mary, "She loves those who love her—she goes so far as even to serve those who serve her, using all her power, if they be sinners, to obtain their pardon of her Son." As the Son mediates with the Father, so Mary ceases not to treat with both, the great affair of our salvation.

Sinners, whosoever you may be, if the enormity of your crimes causes you to doubt, not of the power, but of the goodness of Mary, know that she herself assured the venerable Sister Villani that, after the title of Mother of God, there is not one in which she more delights than in that of advocate of sinners. St. Bonaventure says that, "One of Mary's greatest privileges is that of being omnipotent next her Son." But as this would avail as nought, if she were not interested for us, He has given her a heart so tender and compassionate that no mother ever loved her children as this blessed Mother loves us.

"Who," continues the saint, "has had more solicitude for us than you, O Mother of mercy? Who supports us like you, in the afflictions we meet? Who intercedes for us more efficaciously than you? Your protection is more powerful, and your love more warm than all that the human understanding can conceive; for, as the learned Idiot says, 'If the other saints succor their clients, the Mother of God, in her solicitude, is the advocate of all.'"

“Mary,” says the blessed Amedée, “assists continually near the throne of God, to intercede for us; as she beholds in the light of God all our miseries, she has for them all the commiseration of a truly maternal heart.” Hence, Richard of St. Lawrence encourages all to go with confidence to this clement advocate, assuring them that she is always ready to speak in their behalf.

With what efficacy, with what tender charity does Mary plead our cause! From the consideration thereof, St. Augustine says to her: “Men have but one sole advocate in heaven, and it is you, holy Virgin.” Indeed, although the saints try to procure our salvation, the charity of Mary surpasses theirs by so many degrees that we may truly style her our only advocate. According to the beautiful expression of St. Germanus, “*Non est satiety defensionis ejus*” (She is never tired in defending us).

A person, plunged in all kinds of disorders, had once a vision, in which he seemed to stand before the tribunal of Jesus Christ. The devil was his accuser, and Mary his advocate. The enemy presented against him the catalogue of his sins, which, being placed in the scale of divine justice, weighed much heavier than his good works. But what did his powerful protectress? Extending her hand, she inclined the light side of the balance in favor of the criminal, giving him thus to understand that if he changed his life, she would obtain his pardon. He did repent in consequence, and persevered to the end of his life.

Poor sinners! how lamentable would be your lot if you had not this powerful advocate—this advocate so wise, so prudent and so tender, that her Son cannot condemn those whom she defends. St. Bonaventure calls her the prudent Abigail—for as this woman by her prudence saved her husband Nabal from David’s indignation, thus Mary knows so well how to appease the divine justice, that God Himself blesses her, and in some manner thanks her for hindering Him from punishing sinners, and consigning them to their unhappy fate. It is because the eternal Father wishes even to exhaust His mercies in our favor that, after having given us Jesus for mediator, with Him He has given us Mary for advocate, next to Jesus. “Undoubtedly,” says St. Bernard, “Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man, but because men fear that divine person, who is destined one day to judge them, it has been necessary to give them a mediator with the Mediator, and none was so fit for this office as Mary, His Mother.” It would be injuring this most gracious Lady to fear to come to her throne. Read the holy gospels carefully; peruse all that the sacred penmen have said of Mary, and if you find one single word, one trait of harshness or even severity in her life, I shall permit you to fear. But in vain will you seek it; hence, dry up your tears, afflicted souls; take courage, ye fearful and pusillanimous, the Mother of your Judge is

the advocate of sinners—a most powerful advocate, who knows how to appease the Lord; a universal advocate, whose credit the whole world has experienced.

We shall conclude this section by the eloquent apostrophe which William of Paris puts into the mouth of the sinner who has recourse to Mary: “I come to you, glorious Mother of God, whom the Church styles Mother of mercy: you, O Mary, never met a refusal, and your intercession you have not refused to any. Is it in vain that the Church proclaims you the advocate of the miserable? God forbid, O mediatrix of men, and their only hope after Jesus, that my sins may be an obstacle to your mercies, for all that you possess of grace and glory, even your divine maternity itself, if I may say so, you owe to sinners. Far, then, be from me the thought that you can refuse your clemency to those who implore it: come, then, to my aid, O ‘mediatrix of peace between God and His people,’ in the name of that clemency which is peculiar to you, and which infinitely surpasses my sins and iniquities.”

Example.

The Venerable Mother Catherine of Bar, called in religion Sister Mectilda of the holy Sacrament, foundress of the order of the perpetual adoration of this divine mystery, relates that in her first noviciate at Bruyeres her community was afflicted with an epidemic disease, which rendered spiritual and temporal succor so rare that they could scarcely procure Mass on Sunday. To complete her afflictions, the poor novice fell into a state of great interior desolation; everything disgusted her with her state—she lost all relish for spiritual things. Having no person to console her, she was on the point of sinking under the trial, when she went and prostrated herself at the feet of the holy Virgin, her ordinary resource. There, melting in tears, she said in a spirit of humble confidence, “O most holy Virgin, my Mother and patroness, have you conducted me hither to perish? I have not the means of serving God, or of knowing my obligations; I am lost if you yourself do not condescend to exercise toward me the office of mistress, as you have hitherto performed that of Mother.” Wonderful to relate, her prayer was instantly heard, her troubles calmed, and Mary so instructed her in all her duties that she feared not to say afterward, “Whatever I know, I learned it from the holy Virgin.”

Prayer.

Advocate of all men, can I flatter myself you will become mine, after having deserved on account of my sins to be abandoned by you? But what will be my lot if you forsake me? Who will undertake my cause if you refuse to plead it?

O Mary, whose bounty exceeds my malice and ingratitude, you who were born for the salvation of sinners, behold my repentance and my confidence, and receive into your maternal arms the guilty child that rushes into them, with this prayer in his mouth, "Take pity on me."

3—MARY IS MEDIATRIX OF PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND SINNERS.

The grace of God is a treasure above all price: there is nothing so desirable. The Holy Ghost calls it an infinite treasure, because it is by the grace of God we are elevated to the dignity of friends of God, so that Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, hesitates not to address, by the title of friends, those who are in grace. "You are my friends." Oh, accursed sin, which destroys this precious friendship, and renders the soul an object of hatred instead of love! What should the person do, then, who by sin has lost this precious gift? He should seek a mediator who will procure his pardon, and put him in possession of the forfeited blessing. "Console yourselves, then, sinners," says St. Bernard, "since God has given you His Son as mediator. But what! you imagine that this merciful Saviour is harsh and rigorous; you obstinately figure to yourselves as terrible, amiability itself. Ah, people of little faith, learn that Jesus has nailed your sins to His cross, and redeemed you in His blood. Well, if the majesty of Jesus terrifies you, because He is God as well as man, remember that Mary, a pure creature, is your advocate with Him; recur to her—she is, my dear children, the ladder of sinners, by which they ascend again to the height of grace. Mary is all my confidence—Mary is the foundation of my hope."

Hear how the Holy Ghost makes Mary speak in the Canticles: "I am the defence of those who recur to me—my mercy is to them an impregnable tower, and hence the Lord has established me a mediatrix of peace between Him and sinners." "This powerful mediatrix," says Cardinal Hugo, "procures peace for those who are at war; by her, pardon is granted to the guilty, salvation to the lost, mercy to those who are in despair. Mary is also compared to the pavilions of Solomon, where they only spoke of peace, in preference to the tents of David, where there was only question of war, that we may learn she never treats of vengeance against sinners, but of reconciliation and pardon."

The dove which returned to the ark with the green olive branch was a figure of Mary. "O blessed Virgin," says St. Bonaventure to her, "you are that faithful dove, who, after the sad shipwreck of the universe, have borne our Lord Jesus Christ, the sacred olive branch, the sign of mercy; and as peace was given to earth by you, it is through you that sinners continue to be reconciled with God."

The rainbow which St. John saw encompass the throne of the Eternal

was also an emblem of the holy Virgin, as she is always present to mitigate the sentences pronounced against sinners. It was Mary God had in view when he said to Noah, "I shall place in heaven a sign of peace, and in beholding it, I shall remember the perpetual alliance I have made with men."

The principal office given to Mary, when she appeared on earth, was to raise man from sin, and to reconcile him with God. "*Pasce hædos tuos*" (Feed your goats) said the Lord in creating her. We know that sinners are designated by the goats, as the just are by the sheep. "The goats," says William of Paris, "are confided to you, O Mary, that you may transform them into sheep;" thus, while they deserved to be sent to the left hand, they shall, through your intercession, be placed at the right. Here we may observe that God does not command Mary to feed all the goats indiscriminately, but *her own goats* (*Pasce hædos tuos*), for she does not save all sinners, but those who serve and honor her; as to those who are not devout to her, who never beg her aid to arise from their sins, she will not recognize them as her flock, and the left hand will be their station on the great day of the Lord.

A gentleman whose sins were so enormous that he despaired of their remission, was advised by a good religious man to recur to the blessed Virgin. In compliance with this advice he went to a celebrated oratory in the city, consecrated to our Lady, and had no sooner cast his eyes on the image of the holy Virgin than he felt a great sentiment of confidence. He prostrated himself, then, to kiss the feet of the image, when lo! the hand was moved toward him, and on it he saw these words, "I shall save thee from those who afflict thee." The heart of the poor sinner was so filled with contrition for his sins, and love for Jesus and Mary, that he died on the spot.

"I am the loadstone of hearts," says Mary to St. Bridget; "as the loadstone has the property of attracting iron, thus I attract hearts hardened as adamant, to give them to God." This prodigy we daily witness: we often see in our missions that many sinners, who remained insensible at other sermons, become moved at that on the clemency of the holy Virgin.

"Mary," says St. Chrysostom, "has been elected from all eternity as Mother of God, that she may save by her mercy those to whom her Son in justice cannot grant pardon." "Yes," adds St. Anselm, "Mary has been raised to her eminent dignity, rather for sinners than for the just, and since she is indebted to the guilty for her glorious maternity, how can I despair of pardon, however enormous my crimes may be?"

The Church, in the prayers for the vigil of the Assumption, teaches that this glorious Queen has been assumed into heaven, to intercede con-

fidently for us (*fiducialiter*). Hence she is styled by St. Justin the arbiter of our lot; "As an arbiter decides," says he, "between two parties, thus Jesus permits His Mother to decide between Him and us."

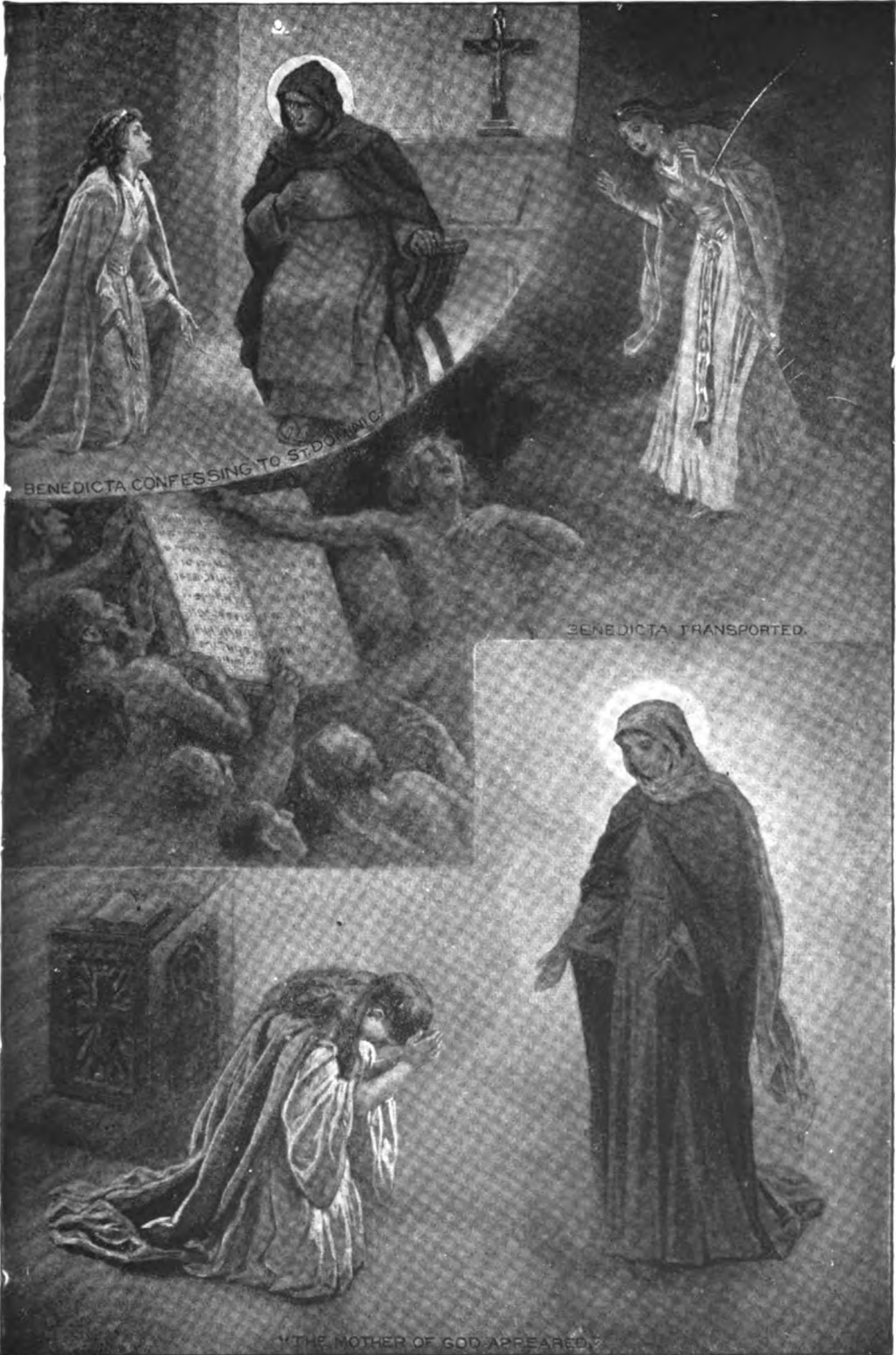
"What!" says Abbot Adam, "can he fear to perish who has Mary for his Mother and advocate?" "Will you, holy Virgin," adds the same saint, "refuse to implore your Son for another son, or to demand of the Redeemer the pardon of the redeemed? No, certainly; for you are not ignorant that the same God who has rendered His Son a mediator between Him and man, has made you advocate between the Judge and criminals."

Example.

In the time of St. Dominic, there lived at Florence a young girl named Benedicta, the scandal of the city by her vices and disorders. God, who had over her peculiarly merciful designs, permitted that when the saint came to preach there, Benedicta might be led to hear him. Though it was mere curiosity that conducted her to the church, she was so moved by the discourse that, entering into herself, she went to the saint, and, having made her confession, received the holy absolution at his hands; but, soon after, the force of habit and very dangerous occasions led her into her former excesses: when St. Dominic was made acquainted with her relapse, he sought her out, and persuaded her to return to God by a second confession. To confirm her repentance, God then permitted her to be transported into hell, where she saw the souls of many who were damned through her means, and a list of her crimes and scandals. Full of terror and alarm, the poor penitent invoked Mary, and instantly she heard a voice tell her that the Mother of God had succeeded in procuring the prolongation of her life to expiate her crimes. The vision then disappeared, and Benedicta was entirely converted. But the terrible register of her sins was continually before her eyes. One day as she was wishing to be delivered from the pain it caused, she asked the blessed Virgin that her sins might be entirely effaced. The Mother of God appeared, and promised that her request should be granted, on condition she would never forget the great mercy of God toward her, the enormity of her sins, and the sufferings they caused Jesus Christ; and, second, that she would consider how many were damned who deserved it much less than she. Benedicta obeyed most exactly her powerful patroness, and some time after our Lord showed her the formidable register, saying, "Behold, thy sins are effaced: write in their place acts of all the virtues." This the holy penitent continued to do, till by a happy death she terminated her mortal life.

Prayer.

O my clement mistress, since you are our advocate, plead our cause, fulfill your office. Do not say my cause is too bad ; however precarious, it cannot be lost in the hand of such an advocate as you. The greatest sinner is saved if you undertake his defence, and surely you are too merciful not to undertake mine. Mary, my hope and refuge, increase my confidence in your intercession, which is to me the surest pledge of recovering the friendship of my God. Amen.



INTERCESSION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

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CHAPTER VII.

"Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte" (Thine eyes of mercy toward us).

I—MARY IS EVER WATCHFUL TO SUCCOR OUR MISERIES.



ST. EPIPHANIUS calls Mary *multoculam* (of many eyes), and indeed with reason, for the compassionate eyes of this Mother are always opened on us, and seem to be multiplied for the relief of our wants. A possessed person replied, when the exorcist demanded what the blessed Virgin did, that she ascends and descends—that is to say, this gracious Queen descends to earth, to bring grace to man, and ascends to heaven to present man's petitions to God. St. Andrew Avellino styled Mary the negociatrix of Paradise. Indeed, she is always exercising works of mercy—always obtaining favors from the King in behalf of the distressed. The Lord, according to the royal prophet, has His eyes always on the just; but "The Virgin," says Richard of St. Lawrence, "has her eyes on the just and sinners; for," says he, "the eyes of Mary are maternal eyes, and a mother is not content with preserving her child from falling, but raises it the moment it comes to the ground."

St. Bridget one day heard Jesus say to His Mother, "Ask what you please"—to which she replied, "I implore mercy for the miserable." "O Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "you have such a care of the unfortunate that one would think you had no desire, no occupation, but that of succoring them."

"What!" says St. Peter Damian to the holy Virgin, "is it because you are raised to the dignity of Queen, that you would forget your unfortunate brethren? Ah, no," he continues, "such is not the case—the only use you make of your influence is to succor the miserable, to save the sinner; we may say to you with more reason than Ruth said to Booz, 'Be thou blessed, for thy last favor surpasses the first.'" "Indeed," as St. Bonaventure observes, "if Mary's compassion was great while she abode on earth, it is much greater since she reigns in heaven, where she has a much more extensive knowledge of our wants and miseries;" as the splendor of the sun surpasses that of the moon, so does Mary's present mercy exceed her former. Who is there among men that has not enjoyed the light of the sun, and what individual is there who never felt the beneficent rays of Mary's mercy? In the Canticles she is compared to this

burning luminary (*electa ut sol*), because, as nothing created can conceal itself from the warmth of this beneficent and regenerating orb, and as all bodies, celestial and terrestrial, are illumined by its rays, so all the inhabitants of the earth are vivified by the clemency of the august Virgin. It is related of a man in the kingdom of Valentia, that, having committed great crimes, and fearing the pursuit of justice, he determined to become a Turk, and was going to embark for Barbary, whence chance conducted him into a church, where F. López, of the Society of Jesus, was preaching on the divine mercy. The impression made on the guilty man was so great that he was converted, and made his confession to F. Lopez. The good father was so struck with the suddenness of the change, that he asked him if he had not retained some pious practice which drew on him the effects of divine mercy. The penitent replied that he practised no other devotion save that of praying to the blessed Virgin, every day, never to abandon him. The same father one time heard, in hospital, the confession of an invalid, who had not confessed for fifty-five years. During all this time he practised no devotion whatsoever, except that, whenever passing before the image of the blessed Virgin, he took off his hat, and begged her to obtain that he might not die in mortal sin. He said that at one time in a quarrel, he was in danger of being slain, but when he cried out, "Oh, I am a dead man, and I shall be damned! Mother of sinners, help me!" he found himself transported, without knowing how, to a place of security.

"Mary," says St. Bernard, "makes herself all to all—she opens to all men the treasures of her mercy, and each one there finds what he wants; the slave his ransom, the infirm health, the afflicted consolation, the sinner pardon." "Who in the world," says St. Bonaventure, "would refuse to love this amiable Queen? She is more beautiful than the sun, and sweeter than honey. She is a treasure of bounty, clemency, affability itself. I salute you," continues the saint in the same impassioned strain, "I salute you, my Mother and mistress; what do I say? the soul of my life, the treasure of my heart. Pardon me if I say I love you, for if I am not worthy of loving you, you are most worthy of being loved by me."

It was revealed to St. Gertrude that when a person devoutly pronounced these words, "Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us," Mary graciously looked upon him, and heard his petition. This tender Mother has such a desire of benefiting mankind that she considers it a great injury not to demand some favor from her.

The prophet Isaiah predicted that the threshold of the divine mercy would be prepared for men by the redemption. "What is the threshold of mercy?" asks St. Bonaventure; "it is Mary," replies he, "since it is by her that sinners and just have access to God." Our Lady, like our Lord,

is full of mercy ; the Mother, like the Son, refuses not her pity to those who invoke her. The Abbot Guericc thus represents Jesus addressing Mary : " I have placed in you, O Mother, the throne of my grace ; it is by you I shall hear the prayers of men : as you have clothed me with your humanity, I shall invest you with my divinity."

One day, as St. Gertrude most devoutly pronounced these words of the "*Salve Regina*," " Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us," the holy Virgin appeared, and, showing her the divine Infant, whom she held in her arms, said, " Behold the merciful eyes, that I can at pleasure turn upon those who invoke me." As a sinner was once weeping before an image of the holy Virgin, and entreating her to obtain his pardon of God, he heard her say to the divine Infant, " My Son, will these tears be shed in vain ?" And Jesus immediately replied that He forgave the delinquent.

" O Mother of grace," says the Abbot Adam, " your compassion is equal to your power : when is it that you did not compassionate the miserable, O Mother of mercy ? When have you refused to succor them, Mother of power ? Ah, you are as prompt in succoring as in hearing us. Satiated yourself, then, O great Queen, with the glory of your Son, and, for pity's sake, let the crumbs fall to your children."

Example.

Nothing more contributed to extend the devotion of the holy scapular than the prodigies which were wrought in favor of those who practised it. The following is not the least remarkable : At the siege of Montpellier a soldier who wore this badge of devotion to Mary received a musket-shot as he mounted a battery ; but the ball, after perforating his clothes, stopped when it came to the scapular, and he remained unhurt. Lewis XIII., who was at the siege, was so struck by the miracle that he became a member of this holy sodality.

Prayer.

O holy Virgin, the most sublime of all creatures, cast on me one of those favorable looks which impart life. If you say my sins are great, I shall allege that your mercy is unbounded. No, it never shall be said that your clemency, which fills all the earth, found limits in my crimes.

CHAPTER VIII.

“*Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende*” (And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of the womb, Jesus).

I—MARY PRESERVES HER SERVANTS FROM HELL.

IT is impossible that a true servant of Mary should be damned. This assertion may seem hazardous, but before it is condemned let us see how it is supported: by true servants of Mary, we do not mean certain devotees who seem to take advantage of some pious practices in honor of the Mother of God to sin with more freedom; these are presumptuous persons who occasion some to condemn us for boasting of the clemency of Mary, as if thereby we encouraged vice, which deserves chastisement instead of mercy. It is not of such we speak, but rather of those who, to the homage they render the Mother of God, join a sincere desire of being converted; and we again affirm that they cannot be lost. Father Grasset, Vega, Mendoza, and many other theologians, are of the same opinion. But to prove that they have not lightly advanced it, let us see how far they are supported by the doctors of the Church.

“Blessed Virgin,” says St. Anselm, “as it is impossible that he who neglects and despises you can be saved, so it is impossible that he who has recourse to you, sincerely, can be lost.” St. Antoninus says, “As those from whom Mary turns her merciful eyes cannot be saved, it necessarily follows that those on whom she looks with benignity will share in the eternal glory.”

And here let us ask if the words, “It is impossible that he who is not devout to Mary,” should not make those tremble who despise or neglect her? Let all such hear the anathema pronounced against them by Albertus Magnus: “The people who will not serve you shall perish” (*Gens quæ non servierit tibi, peribit*). And St. Bonaventure, “He who neglects Mary shall die in his sins; he who does not invoke her shall have no share in the kingdom of God;” and again, “There is no hope of salvation for those from whom Mary turns her face.” Before him, St. Ignatius, martyr, had pronounced that a sinner can be saved only by having recourse to the blessed Virgin, whose infinite mercy obtains salvation for those who would be condemned by infinite justice. Some pretend that this text is not taken from St. Ignatius, but we know that St. Chrysostom

attributes it to him ; and is it not in the same sense the Church applies to Mary these words of the Proverbs, " All who hate me love death " ?

On the contrary, Mary assures us that " He who hears her shall not be confounded." St. Bonaventure says, " Great Queen, he who perseveres in your service is far from damnation." " No," adds St. Hilary, " he will not be lost, although he might have hitherto grievously offended his God."

Behold the reason, that when the devil has deprived the soul of the grace of God, he uses every effort to destroy in it all devotion to the holy Virgin. Sarah said to Abraham, " Send away this slave (Agar), with her son," for she feared that if the former was retained, she might succeed in recalling the latter. Thus the devil, not content with depriving the soul of Jesus, wishes also to send away Mary. "*Ejice ancillam hanc et filium ejus*" (Dismiss the Mother and the Son), does he say, for fear that the Mother, by her prayers, may reinstate the Son in His former possession ! And the wicked fiend acts wisely ; " For," says F. Pacchinechelli, " he who is faithful in honoring the Mother of the Lord will very soon receive, by her means, the Lord Himself." St. Ephrem styles devotion to our Lady the charter of freedom from the slavery of hell, etc. He calls her the protectress of those who are running to their damnation ; and if it is true (and St. Bernard affirms it) that the blessed Virgin wants neither will nor power to save us, both because her prayers must be heard, and that she is more interested for our salvation than we ourselves, are we not warranted in concluding that a true servant of Mary's cannot perish ? What mother is there, who, if she could save her son's life by petitioning his judge, would refuse to do it ? And how, then, can we suppose that Mary, the tenderest of all mothers, will not save one of her children from eternal death, when it is so easy for her to effect it ?

Ah, my dear reader, if you feel within you a sentiment of true respect and love for the Queen of heaven, thank the Lord ; for, according to St. John Damascene, He only grants this grace to those whom He designs to save. " Mother of my God," said this great saint, " if I trust in you, my salvation is certain ; if I am under your protection, I have nothing to fear, for your devotion is a shield which God places only in the hands of those whom He designs to save." Erasmus also styles the holy Virgin the terror of hell (*Salve inferorum formido*).

How great is the rage of Satan, when he cannot deprive a soul of devotion to the Mother of God ! We read in the life of the blessed Alphonso Alvarez, a great servant of hers, that being one time greatly tormented in prayer by temptations to impurity, the devil said to him, " Cease to honor Mary, and I shall cease to tempt thee."

Blosius recounts that our Lord revealed to St. Catherine of Sienna that in consideration of His incarnation in the womb of Mary, it was decreed

that whosoever recurred to her, although he might be a sinner, would never, if he were disposed to amend, become the devil's prey. David already prayed the Lord to preserve him from hell, because of his zeal for the honor of Mary. "Lord," said he, "I have loved the beauty of thy house ; let not my soul perish with the impious." He says "of thy house," because Mary is that house of the purest gold that God Himself erected to be His habitation on earth, and His place of repose when He came to dwell among us. "Those who love you, O Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "will enjoy a profound peace, and their souls shall not see death forever." "No," said Blossius, "an humble servant of Mary's never perished."

Oh, how many sinners would have persevered in their wickedness, and, in consequence, be eternally damned, but for Mary's intercession ! It is the opinion even of many theologians, and of St. Thomas particularly, that the blessed Virgin has obtained for several who died in the state of mortal sin the suspension of their sentence, and their return to life, that they might do penance. Some authors relate many examples of the like : among others, Odoard, who lived in the ninth century, relates that Ademan, a deacon, came to life as they were going to bury him, and told all at his funeral that he had seen hell, and the place therein prepared for him, but that the Mother of God had obtained his resurrection, that he might expiate his sins. Surius relates a similar case of a Roman, named Andrew ; and Pelbart states, that in his time, the emperor Sigismond, in crossing the Alps with his army, met in his way the skeleton of a man, whence a voice issued, which demanded confession. It was a soldier, he said, who had been slain in the state of mortal sin, and that Mary, for whom he entertained a special devotion, obtained that his soul might sojourn in his remains until he could confess his sins ; immediately after receiving absolution it ceased to give signs of its presence.

We do not cite these examples as an encouragement to sinners to persevere in their crimes ; this would be as great extravagance as that of a man who from mere levity would cast himself from a precipice, under pretence that the blessed Virgin could preserve him unhurt ; but rather to excite our confidence in the Mother of God, since, as they seem to show, she can save even those who died in mortal sin, with how much more certainty can those count on her intercession who during life are sincerely converted ? "Yes," as St. Anselm says, "he for whom Mary prays even once, will be exempt from eternal evils ; and again, who will dare tell me I shall not find my Judge favorable, if the Mother of mercy advocates my cause ?" "My soul," says the blessed Erric Suzon, "is in the hands of Mary ; so, if the Judge wishes to condemn me, the sentence must pass through this clement Queen, and she well knows how to prevent its execution."

Example.

Monsieur Beauveau, marquis of Novian, and afterward a religious of the Society of Jesus, owed his conversion to a tribute of respect which he once paid the holy Virgin. In the year 1649, when the German troops were quartered in Lorraine, it happened that some soldiers at Novian, after having drunk to excess, began to play at dice: one of them, having lost all his money, rose up from the table in a great fury, and perceiving a picture of the blessed Virgin hanging in the room, advanced toward it, and, as if it had been the cause of his loss, gave it several strokes, and uttered against it a thousand blasphemies; but no sooner had he done so, than the divine vengeance visibly fell upon him, for he was seized all over with a violent trembling, accompanied with such torturing agonies that he could neither take food nor rest. The troops being ordered to leave Novian, they tied him on a horse, as he was unable to walk; but the violence of his pain caused him to throw himself off, and he died gnawing the earth and foaming with rage, to the great terror of his comrades, who witnessed the frightful scene.

This visible punishment was spoken of at Novian with fear and alarm, and they resolved, after some time, to repair the sacrilege. For this end, the parish priest, the chaplain of the Marquis Beauveau, some missionaries, and the priests of the neighborhood, went in clerical costume from the church to the place where the outrage had been committed. But when the procession arrived, though the parish priest gave the signal for some one to take the image, no person obeyed him. The marquis, who was present, felt indignant at this insensibility for the honor of Mary, and despite of human respect, took it up himself, and respectfully bore it to the chapel of his chateau, where it was placed by the command of the bishop, and ever since honored in a particular manner. The holy Virgin speedily recompensed this triumph over worldly pride gained in her honor, for this good gentleman avowed that he felt such an extraordinary change in his sentiments that he was thenceforward determined to live as a perfect Christian. To know how faithful he was to this grace, it suffices to say that some time after he renounced all his titles and distinctions to become an humble religious in the holy Society of Jesus.—*Life of F. Beauveau.*

Prayer.

Hail Mary, the hope of Christians! receive the humble request of a sinner, who loves and honors you. It is from you I hold my life—you are the pledge of my salvation. I entreat you, then, to free me by your prayers from the burden of my iniquities; dissipate the darkness of my mind, destroy the inordinate affections of my heart, repress the tempta-

tions of my enemies, and so regulate my life that, by you and under your protection, I may arrive at eternal beatitude. Amen.

2—MARY SUCCORS HER SERVANTS IN PURGATORY.

Happy, thrice happy, are the servants of this Mother of mercy! for, not satisfied with protecting them through life, her maternal cares are continued toward them, even in the flames of purgatory. The more pitiable the case of these poor souls, the more compassion they experience on the part of Mary. St. Bernardine of Sienna assures us that the Queen of heaven has a certain dominion over the prison wherein the souls of God's servants are purified; and applying to Mary this of Ecclesiasticus, "I walk amid the waves of the sea," he says that "the blessed Virgin descends into the gloomy abyss of purgatory, and walks amid the waters of bitterness that encompass her children, to assuage their torments and alleviate their woes." "See," said Novarin, "how important it is to serve this great Queen faithfully, since she does not forget her subjects when suffering in flames:" and again, if Mary succors all the souls in purgatory, she affords particular aid to those who have been most devoted to her during life. This blessed Virgin once said to St. Bridget, "I am the Mother of all the souls in purgatory; the pains they suffer are every moment lessened by my prayers." Indeed, the name of Mary alone, echoed in this place of woe, assuages the torments of the poor sufferers: it is a balm for their sorrows, a celestial dew which tempers the ardors of their flames.

But Mary does more—she releases the faithful from purgatory. It was a pious tradition, and is mentioned by Gerson, that on the day of her assumption, purgatory was emptied, all its captives being freed by her prayers. Novarin affirms what many grave authors assert, that the moment the blessed Virgin ceased to live, she obtained of her Son the release of all the souls then in purgatory, that they might accompany her to heaven. From this moment she was privileged to obtain not only the alleviation, but even the abridgment of the torment of these poor souls.

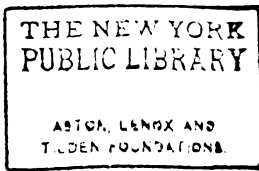
St. Peter Damian relates that a certain woman, appearing after death, said that she, with such a number of souls as exceeded the population of Rome, had been released from purgatory on a feast of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin. St. Denis, the Carthusian, assures us that the like occurs at the feasts of Christmas and Easter; that on these solemnities Mary, accompanied with several legions of angels, descends into purgatory and delivers numbers of souls. Novarin declares that this takes place also on all the festivals of the blessed Virgin.

And why should we not hope for the same favors, if we are truly devout to this blessed Mother? Nay, why should we not expect, if we ren-



REMEMBER MARY

Tenderest hearted Virgin,
how from of old, the ear
hath never heard, that he who
ran to Thee for refuge, im-
plored Thy help, and sought
Thy prayers, was forsaken
of God. Virgin of Virgins,
Mother, emboldened by this
confidence, I fly to Thee, to
Thee I come, and in Thy pre-
sence I a weeping Sinner,
stand. Mother of the Word
Incarnate, Cease not away
my prayer; but in thy pity
hear, and answer. Amen.



der her a special veneration, to escape even these purifying flames, and go straight to heaven, as did the blessed Godfrey? Mary one time despatched the brother Abbond to this holy man, saying, "Go, Abbond, tell Brother Godfrey to advance in virtue, then he will belong to me and my Son, and when he dies, I shall preserve him from purgatory." If we desire (as we indeed should) to assist the souls in purgatory, we should interest the blessed Virgin in their favor by our prayers.

Example.

A religious man of the order of St. Bernard used to say the rosary every day before dinner. Once it happened, that being at table, he remembered that he had not paid his accustomed devotions to Mary; he immediately withdrew, and no sooner began his prayer, than the Mother of God appeared, clothed in a mantle all ornamented with "Hail Mary's," except one little corner. "Complete the few 'Aves' which remain unfinished," said she, "and I will conduct you to heaven." He redoubled his devotions, and in a few days this good Mother, after consoling him on his death-bed, introduced his soul into the kingdom of her divine Son.

Prayer.

Mother of God! Mary, sublimest of all creatures! it is but too true, that many on earth neither love nor honor you, but I am consoled that you are glorified in heaven by the angels and saints, and that even here you still have many faithful servants. Ah, that I had in my heart the love which is entertained for you by all these together! Ah, that I could command the hearts of all! I would consecrate them this moment to your honor and service. Your beauty has attracted the Son of the eternal Father, and will you continue to have no charms for us wretched mortals? Ah no; we love you, blessed Mother, and every day wish to love you more; not alone because your intercession will procure us a happy death, and the abridgment of our sufferings in purgatory, but also because, from your connection with the adorable Trinity, you are, after God, the most worthy object of our love and praise.

3—MARY CONDUCTS HER SERVANTS TO HEAVEN.

The sign of predestination appears on the heads of the servants of Mary. Commenting on this verse of Ecclesiasticus, which the Church applies to Mary, "In all things I sought rest, and I shall abide in the inheritance of the Lord," Cardinal Hugo says, "Blessed is he with whom Mary abides: her love for us incites her to wish to see us devout to her; several refuse to gratify her desire, but those in whom her devotion subsists are the inheritance of the Lord." Yes, truly, this Lord, who has

made of her womb His habitation, desires that she might dwell in the midst of Jacob, that is, that devotion to, and confidence in, her, might be riveted in the hearts of all His elect.

Of how many souls would not heaven be deprived, but for Mary's intercession? "I make lights in heaven which shall never be extinguished." These eternal lights are the servants of Mary. "All who trust in Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "will see heaven's gates open to receive them after death" (*Qui speraverit in illa porta cœli reserabitur ei*). St. Ephrem calls devotion to Mary "The key of paradise." Let us beg of her to unlock to us the gate of this celestial abode, since she has the key; what do I say?—she is herself the gate of heaven, since the Church styles her *Janua cœli*. This holy Church also styles Mary "The star of the sea;" for as mariners are conducted in their course by the light of the stars, so Christians by looking on Mary are guided to the port of eternal salvation.

St. Peter Damian, for the same reason, calls her the "Ladder to heaven;" for as God descended from heaven by her, so man, by her means, deserves to ascend from earth to heaven. "You have been filled with graces, Queen of the universe," says St. Athanasius, "that you might become the way of our salvation, and the road by which we ascend to our celestial country." St. Bernard calls Mary a "Vehicle to heaven;" and another saint says, "Hail, noble chariot, by which your servants are conducted to the end of their course!" "Happy are they who know you, O Mother of God," says St. Bonaventure, "for to know you is the way to eternal life, and to celebrate your praises is the high road to heaven."

We read in the chronicles of St. Francis that Brother Leo once saw in a vision two ladders, one red, at the summit of which was Jesus Christ; and the other white, at the top of which presided His blessed Mother. He observed that many who endeavored to ascend the first ladder, after mounting a few steps, fell down; and on trying again, were equally unsuccessful, so that they never attained the summit; but, a voice having told them to make trial of the white ladder, they soon gained the top, the blessed Virgin having held forth her hands to help them. "Who, then," does Denis the Carthusian say with reason, "who will be saved, if not he for whom Mary prays?" "By me kings reign," does she say; "by me Christians rule their passions on earth, and reign as kings with God in heaven." "Mary is the mistress of paradise," says Richard of St. Lawrence; "she there admits whomsoever she pleases, and no wonder, since she is Mother of the Lord of paradise." "He for whom Mary pleads," says Abbot Gueric, "is as sure of being saved as if he were already in heaven." "To be of her court is the greatest honor to which we can aspire," says St. John Damascene; "to serve her is to reign; but those who

neglect and despise her shall perish forever." Wherefore, all you who will have life eternal serve and honor Mary ; for she is, as it were, the bridge of salvation, which God has prepared for us, in order to pass securely over the troubled waters of this life.

Those even who have deserved hell should not despair for a moment, provided they recur to Mary. "Sinners," says St. Germanus, "have sought God by you, and been saved, holy Virgin." Richard of St. Lawrence remarks, also, that whereas, in the Apocalypse Mary is represented as crowned with stars, she is shown in the Canticles as crowned with wild beasts ; and the reason he assigns for it is, that these ferocious animals, which are emblematic of sinners, are, by the intercession of Mary, changed into most brilliant stars, and give more lustre to her crown than material stars could bestow. Sister Seraphina of Capri, a great servant of God, prayed to the blessed Virgin in the novena, or nine days' devotion for her Assumption, for the conversion of a thousand sinners, but afterward feared she had asked too much ; whereupon Mary appeared and said : "Believest thou that I have not sufficient influence with my Son to obtain the conversion of a thousand persons ? Behold, thy request has been granted." Saying this, she showed her in heaven the souls of many who, through her intercession, did penance, and were thus preserved from hell.

It is true that no man on earth knows whether he be worthy of her love or hatred ; but to this question of David, "Lord who shall stand in thy holy place ?" St. Bonaventure replies, "He who will devote himself to Mary ; if she wills our salvation, it is already secured."

"Very justly," says St. Ildephonsus, "did Mary predict that all nations should call her blessed, since it is by her that the elect are crowned." "O Mother of our God," says St. Methodius, "you are the beginning, the middle and the end of our felicity."

The beginning, obtaining us the remission of our sins ; the middle, in procuring us perseverance in grace ; the end, in opening paradise to us. "By you, Mary," says St. Bernard, "heaven has been opened, hell has relinquished its prey, the celestial city has been peopled, and eternal life given to those who deserved hell."

Do we desire more assurance of Mary's power and will to obtain us paradise ? We have it in the words which the Church puts into the mouth of this holy Virgin : "Those who work with me," says she, "will not sin, and those who glorify me shall have eternal life." "Blessed, then, and thrice blessed are they," says St. Bonaventure, "who enjoy Mary's favor ; the saints already regard them as their companions in bliss. Whoever bears the livery of the Mother of God," he continues, "will have his name inscribed in the book of the elect." To what purpose, then, do we trou-

ble ourselves about scholastic disputes on predestination? Let us rather endeavor to become true servants of Jesus and Mary, and we shall infallibly be of the number of the elect. "I shall write," says the Lord in the Apocalypse, "I shall write on the foreheads of the conquerors the name of my God, and the name of my holy city." "Now this city of God, of which such glorious things are said, is no other than the most pure Virgin," says St. Gregory.

We may say with St. Paul, "God will recognize for His own those who bear this sign, and not only will He pour on them more abundant graces in this life, but He will still more exalt them in glory." "They will be recognized by distinctive marks in heaven," says F. Nieremberg, "as the servants of this great Queen."

St. Magdalen of Pazzi, in a vision, saw a bark in the midst of the sea, which served as a refuge for the children of Mary; this glorious Queen herself appeared at the helm; from this she understood that those who are protected by the blessed Virgin will be saved from the double shipwreck of sin and death. Let us enter and abide in this fortunate bark of devotion to Mary, and we may be sure of a prosperous voyage, since the Church says to her: "The habitation of all who rejoice is in thee, O holy Mother of God."

Example.

A child of ten years old wonderfully experienced at death the protection of the blessed Virgin. During his life he had often heard his tutor say that "If a person honored Mary every day she would be propitious to him at his last hour." Though, according to the course of nature, the boy might expect to live many years longer, he was so affected at this assurance that he resolved to say often, for this end, "Hail Mary, Mother of mercy!" He was very faithful to this practice; at rising, lying down, going to class, or playing with his companions, he never forgot to salute his good Mother. By a special favor of the blessed Virgin, who wished, without doubt, to withdraw her little servant from the dangers to which his innocence was exposed, he was attacked with a mortal distemper. When in his agony she appeared to him and said, "Don't you know me, my child? I am the person you have so often saluted; I am the Mother of mercy." At these words the child raised his head, and, extending his arms, flew to heaven in company with this ever-blessed Mother. What advantage did he not reap from a little pious instruction! How much more useful was this lesson to him than any he received in earthly sciences!

Prayer.

Draw me after you, O holy Virgin, that I may run in the odor of your perfumes. Draw me, for I am withheld by the weight of my sins and

the malice of my enemies. As no one can go to your Son unless the heavenly Father draw him, so I presume to say, in the same manner, that no one can go to the Father unless you attract him by your prayers. It is you who obtain pardon and grace for sinners; you are the teacher of true wisdom and the repository of the treasures of the Most High. You have found favor with God, being preserved from original sin, filled with the Holy Ghost, and selected as the Mother of His Son. All these graces you have received, O most humble Mary, not alone for yourself, but also for us, in order that you might be able to assist us in all our wants. You succor the just by preserving them in grace, and you help the wicked by disposing them to receive the divine mercy; you aid the dying, preserving them from the snares of Satan, and conducting them after death to the mansions of the blessed.

CHAPTER IX.

“ *O Clemens, O Pia* ” (O most clement ! O most pious !).

I—THE GREATNESS OF MARY’S CLEMENCY AND GOODNESS.

MARY,” says St. Bernard, “is indeed that land promised by the Lord, where milk and honey flow.” Her pity is so great, that she ceases not even for a moment to bring forth fruits of mercy ; she not only deserves to be denominated merciful, but mercy itself. “What can spring from a fountain of mercy,” says St. Bernard, “but waters of salvation ?” Behold why Mary is compared to the olive-tree ; for as oil, the emblem of mercy, proceeds from this tree, so nothing can emanate from Mary but acts of mercy and benevolence ; and when we petition her for this oil, we need not fear the refusal which the five foolish virgins met from the wise. No, for this “most prudent Virgin,” as she is styled by the Church, has oil enough, not only for her own lamp, but for those of all others.

But why is this beautiful olive said to be planted in the fields (*quasi oliva speciosa in campis*) and not rather in a garden environed with walls, or encompassed with hedges ? “It is,” replies Cardinal Hugo, “in order that all who pass by may have access to it.” Explaining this passage of Ecclesiasticus, St. Antoninus adds : “Mary is easy of access to all the world, that both just and sinners may be able to gather with facility the fruits of mercy.” What more assured refuge for sinners than the compassionate bosom of Mary ? There it is that the poor find relief ; the sick, health ; the afflicted, consolation ; the destitute, succor, and those who are in perplexity, counsel. How pitiable would be our lot, if we had not this Mother of mercy always ready to aid us in our miseries ! “God,” says St. John Damascene, “wishing that all His graces might pass through Mary, there is no hope of mercy but through her intercession.”

Nor are any among the saints affected with our miseries like this ever-blessed Virgin : wherever she sees her aid wanted she instantly flies, and in proportion to our necessities her succors are more abundant : she will never cease to exercise these good offices. “*Et usque ad futurum, seculum non desinam*” (until time shall be no more), says Cardinal Hugo, “Mary will not cease to intercede for man, and to succor sinners.” This blessed Virgin was prefigured by Rebecca, when she said to Eliezer, on his asking her for some water, “I shall not only give you to drink, but I shall even provide for the refreshment of your camels.” “Yes, blessed Mother,” says St. Bernard, “you are that generous and compassionate Rebecca,

who not only benefit the just, figured by Abraham's servant, but even confer favors on sinners, who are as beasts without reason." "The liberality of Mary," says Richard of St. Lawrence, "resembles that of her Son Jesus, who, according to St. Paul, 'is munificent to all who invoke him ;'" and another author says: "Blessed Virgin pray for me ; you will ask the graces I want more devoutly than I could, and you will procure me greater favors than I should presume to ask" (*Majori devotione orabis pro me, quam ego auderem petere et majora mihi impetrabis, quam petere præsumam*).

When the children of Zebedee, transported by indiscreet zeal, demanded of the Lord to permit them to invoke fire from heaven on an infidel city, which had refused to admit Him within its walls, Jesus replied to them in a severe tone: "You know not of what spirit you are," as if He had said, "What ! I am descended from heaven to save sinners, and you, my disciples, wish to destroy them? Why do you speak to me of fire and chastisement? this is not my spirit." But we cannot doubt that Mary's spirit is that of Jesus. St. John saw her clothed with the sun ; whence St. Bernard says to her: "You have clothed the Son, the divine Word, O holy Virgin, with human flesh, and He in His turn has invested you with His power and mercy" (*Vestis solem, et vestiris ab eo*).

Mary is so sweet and merciful, that when a poor sinner implores her aid, she never considers his want of merit, but receives him with tenderness and compassion. She is compared to the moon, "because," says St. Hildebert, "as the salutary influences of the queen of night are felt by the lowest terrestrial bodies, thus Mary's amiability is experienced by the greatest sinners, and as, although this orb borrows all its light from the sun, its course is much more rapid in our regard ;" so, St. Anselm says, "our salvation is often more speedily effected by invoking Mary, 'Beautiful as the moon,' than in calling on Jesus the divine Son of justice." For this reason Hugh of St. Victor exhorts us, if we are deterred by apprehension of the divine Majesty, to approach to Mary without fear. She is, it is true, holy and spotless, the Queen of the universe, and the Mother of God, but she is also a pure creature and a child of Adam like unto us (*Si pertimescis ad Deum accedere, respice ad Mariam ; non illic invenis quod timeas : genus tuum vides*).

"In one word," says St. Bernard, "everything in the blessed Virgin is full of clemency and graces ; she makes herself all to all, she is a debtor to the ignorant as well as to the wise, and the bosom of her mercy is ever open to all men." As the enemy of our souls incessantly goes about seeking whom he may devour, so Mary is ever on the alert to seek and to save us. How does it happen that the same God who, in the old law, was so prompt in punishing crime, now deals so mildly with the greatest sinners? It is through love for the blessed Virgin, and in consideration

of her merits. "For a long time," says St. Fulgentius, "heaven and earth would cease to exist, if Mary did not preserve them by her prayers and intercession" (*Cælum et terra jamdudum ruissent si Maria suis precibus non sustentasset*).

"We can really go to God with all confidence," says St. Arnauld, "because the Son is our Mediator with the eternal Father, and the Mother is our mediatrix with her Son: and as Jesus Christ exhibits to His Father His opened side, and the wounds in His hands and feet, so Mary reminds her Son of the womb that bore Him." If I may use the forcible expressions of St. Peter Chrysologus, "This blessed Virgin, having lodged the Son of God in her womb, requires from Him, as the price of her hospitality, peace for the earth, salvation for the lost, and life for the dead." "Mary," says St. Antoninus, "is that throne of grace to which the apostles exhort us to go with confidence, that we may obtain all the assistance necessary for our salvation."

Let us conclude with the beautiful exclamation of St. Bernard on the words, "O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary!" "O Mother of God!" says he, "clement to the necessitous, compassionate to those who invoke you, sweet to those who love you. O Virgin Mary! clement to sinners, benign toward the just, sweet to those who feed on your unfading charms. Oh, clement in delivering, oh, kind in bestowing, oh, sweet in communicating yourself to those that love you, to those who seek you!"

Example.

In the year 1629 the Emperor Ferdinand III., being menaced by the Swedes, who were flushed with victories, had recourse to the blessed Virgin for protection. He caused for this purpose a magnificent pillar to be erected in the grand square of Vienna, ornamented with engravings, emblematic of Mary's immaculate conception; at the four corners of the pillar an angel was represented as armed, and crushing a monster under his feet, emblematic of Mary's victory over original sin; the holy Virgin appeared at the summit of this superb monument, crushing the serpent's head, and at its base was written in Latin: "To the all-perfect and sovereign God, the almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, by whom kings reign: To the Virgin Mother of God, who was conceived without the stain of original sin, and by whom princes govern; who is chosen on this day by particular devotion as sovereign and patroness of Austria: Ferdinand the III. confides, devotes and consecrates all that he possesses, his person, his children, his people, his armies, his provinces; and in perpetual memory of this consecration he has erected this statue."

No festival was ever solemnized with more pomp in Vienna than that of the dedication of this pious monument; it was truly the triumph of

the immaculate conception of Mary; crowds from the court and city assisted thereat; at the hour appointed, the good emperor, accompanied by his son, Ferdinand IV., king of Hungary and Bohemia; by his daughter, Mary Anne of Austria, queen of Spain; the pope's nuncio; the ambassadors of Venice and Spain; all the clergy and religious; the entire of the nobility, and an immense concourse of the citizens, went in procession from the church of the Augustinian fathers to that of the Jesuits. After a very fine sermon on the immaculate conception, high Mass was pontifically celebrated by Prince Ferdinand, bishop of Vienna, and the chant performed by the musicians of the royal chapel. After the communion of the celebrant, the emperor approached the altar, and in presence of the holy sacrament adopted the Mother of God for special patroness of his states and kingdoms, and promised to solemnize as a holy day of obligation the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and to fast the eve of said feast with all under his command: after signing a formula to this effect, he received the holy Communion, and, Mass being concluded, all present went to the place where the statue was set up. There, in the presence of the assembled multitude, the bishop blessed this trophy of the immaculate conception, while the emperor's musicians chanted the litanies of the holy Virgin, accompanied with the sound of trumpets and cymbals, and a grand salute of all the artillery.

After the court and city had spent this solemn day in exercises of the most fervent piety, the Empress Mary Eleanor, widow of Ferdinand II., entertained their devotion in the evening by one of the most magnificent spectacles perhaps until then witnessed there. She gave directions to illuminate all the houses in the city, and that the grand square particularly should be lighted up. The column was so charged with flambeaux of white wax that it appeared all on fire, and the statue was encircled with a rainbow formed of lights. All the princes and princesses with their suites attended in the square, and spent, with the rest of the people, two hours in prayers and litanies solemnly chanted, and did not retire until all was concluded by the benediction of the bishop. We need not add that the emperor soon gathered the fruit of his religious conduct by the blessings that flowed in on his extensive empire.

Prayer.

O Mother of mercy, appease your Son; while on earth you occupied only a small portion of it, but now, elevated to the highest heavens, we regard you as the propitiation of all nations; grant us your prayers, so desirable, so precious; prayers, holy Mother, which, in propitiating the Most High, will obtain us grace to expiate our sins, to practice virtue, to confound our enemies and triumph over their designs. Amen.

CHAPTER X.

O Pulcis Virgo Maria (O sweet Virgin Mary).

I—THE SWEETNESS OF THE HOLY NAME OF MARY, IN LIFE AND DEATH.

IT is well known how much men are guided by caprice in the names which they appropriate to things and persons. Shall we then say that the name of Mary is a mere empty sound, the echo of fancy? Oh, no; this sublime name has not originated on earth—it came from heaven; it was by an express command from the Most High that Joachim and Anne gave it to their holy infant. “Your admirable name, O Mary,” says Richard of St. Lawrence, “has emanated from the treasury of the Divinity; the three persons of the adorable Trinity assembled in council to give you a name. It is, after that of your Son, the greatest of all names; at the name of Mary every knee should bend in heaven, on earth, and in hell.”

Among these sublime privileges of the name of Mary, let us consider the benefit the Lord makes her children find in it in life and death. “First, during life,” St. Honorius (anchoret) said, “the name of Mary is full of a divine sweetness;” and St. Anthony of Padua experienced the same comfort in it which St. Bernard found in that of Jesus. “The name of Jesus,” says the latter, “The name of Mary,” resumes the former, “is joy to the heart, honey to the mouth, melody to the ear” (*Nomen Jesus, nomen Mariæ, jubilus in corde, mel in ore, in aure melos*). It is related of the venerable Father Juvenal Ancina, bishop of Saluces, that he felt in his mouth a most sensible sweetness in pronouncing the name of Mary; and “A certain holy person in Cologne,” says the bishop of Marselius, “seemed to have honey on her tongue when she pronounced it, and I myself experienced the same effect.”

But it is not of this sensible sweetness, which is only granted to a few chosen souls, that I mean to speak; it is a spiritual sweetness—of the consolation, confidence and holy joy, which those experience who pronounce devoutly this holy name. The Abbot Francon says that “After the name of Jesus, there is not a name in heaven nor on earth from which devout persons receive so many graces as from the name of Mary. This name has in it something amiable and divine: when it enters a faithful heart, it diffuses a most sweet odor: though repeated a thousand times, this admirable name is always new.” “O Virgin, worthy of all praise,”

says St. Bernard, "your name, so sweet and amiable, cannot be pronounced without inflaming the heart ; the sole idea of it suffices to recreate your servants. In its remembrance the afflicted are consoled, and sinners encouraged ; it is our riches in poverty, and the consolation of our afflicted hearts."

"Thy name is as oil poured out." "The glory of the name of Mary," says the blessed Alain, "is compared in the Canticles to oil poured out ; for, as this liquid has the property of healing wounds, diffusing odor, and nourishing flame, thus the sweet name of Mary cures the sick, rejoices the heart, and inflames with divine love." "Recur to this great name, O sinner," says Richard of St. Lawrence ; "it will suffice to cure your infirmities ; in short, there is no disease so malignant which is not obliged to yield to its irresistible efficacy." Your name, O Mother of God, is full of grace and benediction ; it cannot be uttered without procuring to the soul some spiritual good ; its virtue is so great that it melts and liquefies the most obdurate hearts. It is, in fine, a delicious odor, a fragrant perfume. May its aromatic balm descend into our hearts, as into well-prepared vessels, and thence diffuse around its salutary effects ; may we often invoke with love, respect and confidence, a name which is to us in this life the principle of grace, and in the world to come, the seed of eternal glory. "To him that shall invoke your name," says Jesus to His mother in presence of St. Bridget, "and confide in your intercession, having at the same time a firm purpose to amend his life, I shall give contrition for his sins, the means of doing sufficient penance, the grace of perseverance, and the kingdom of heaven."

The name of Mary is, moreover, the consolation of her children, because it is the terror of the infernal spirits. At the mention of this holy name, Satan flees, and hell trembles ; "*Satan fugit, infernus contremiscit cum dico : Ave Maria,*" says the blessed Alain. "The name of Mary," says Richard of St. Lawrence, "is a strong tower which not only shelters sinners from the pursuits of divine justice, but preserves the just from the assaults of hell. It is well known that the name of Mary is a most effectual remedy against temptations of the flesh." The last-named author, on this text of St. Luke, "And the Virgin's name was Mary," observes that the evangelist joins the two words "Mary" and "Virgin," to insinuate to us that they are synonymous, that both mean the same thing ; and St. Peter Chrysologus says that "'Mary' indicates chastity, so that he is sure to preserve untarnished this precious virtue, who in the hour of temptation invokes this blessed name."

Who could relate the victories won by the servants of Mary, on invoking her name ? It was by it that St. Anthony of Padua, the blessed Erric Suzon, and numbers of other saints, have made the devils flee.

These wicked spirits fear so much the holy name of Mary, that the bare mention of it causes them to abandon the prey when already in their grasp.

We read in the history of the missions of Japan, that the devils having one day appeared to a new Christian in that country under the form of ferocious beasts for the purpose of striking him with dread, he said to them without being alarmed, "I cannot resist you, if God permits it; treat me as cruelly as you please, but I have, to defend me, the holy names of Jesus and Mary." Scarcely had he pronounced these august names, than the earth opened and engulfed in its bosom all the infernal host.

Let us follow this advice of St. Bernard: "In dangers, perplexities and distress, invoke the name of Mary; let it never depart from your mouth, let it never be effaced from your heart." Let us obey this counsel of the venerable T. à Kempis, "If you wish to be consoled in tribulation, recur to Mary; venerate, invoke, commend yourself to Mary; rejoice with Mary," he continues, "weep with Mary, pray with Mary, walk with Mary, seek Jesus with Mary, desire to live and die with Jesus and Mary."

But if the name of Mary is sweet to her children during life by the graces it procures, it is infinitely sweeter in death by the consolation it infuses and the victory it achieves. F. Sertorius Caput, S. J., desired all those employed in assisting the dying to repeat often to them the name of Mary, "because," says he, "this name of life and salvation supports them in their pains, and puts to flight the infernal spirits." St. Camillus, who founded an order for assisting dying persons, told his religious to remind them to invoke the holy names of Jesus and Mary; and his biographer relates, that he himself in his last moments repeated so devoutly these holy names, with his eyes fixed on their images, and the delights of paradise printed on his countenance, that the assistants were enraptured. This short prayer, "Jesus and Mary," is as easily retained and as full of consolation as it is omnipotent against our enemies. Oh, how happy should we be, if, like F. Fulgentius of Ascoli, Capuchin, we died while pronouncing "O sweet and amiable Mary, how enrapturing to be in your society forever!" or as the blessed Erric, of Citeaux, who expired while invoking this holy name. Let us beg of our good God to grant us the like favor; may our lips move for the last time to pronounce this sweet name, as St. Germanus prays: "*Dei matris nomen sit mihi ultimus lingue loquentis motus.*" Oh, sweet, oh, happy death! since it is those whom God designs to save, that He enables at their last hour to pronounce the all-saving name of Mary.

Holy Virgin, my amiable mistress and Mother! I tenderly love you, and because I love you, your name is infinitely dear to me; I resolve to

invoke it during life, and, above all, at the hour of death. For the glory of your name, I will say to you in the affecting sentiments of St. Bonaventure : "When my soul departs from my body, graciously come forth to meet and receive it ; do not refuse, O Mary, to console it by your sweet presence ; be its ladder and its way to ascend to heaven : in fine, obtain for it pardon and eternal rest."

Example.

St. Stephen, king of Hungary, more illustrious for his extraordinary devotion to the holy Virgin than for his earthly greatness, had such a profound respect for the sacred name of Mary that he would not dare pronounce it, so he generally styled her "The great Lady ;" after his example all the Hungarians gave her the same title, and if at any time they uttered this holy name, all present bent the knee with profound veneration.

The blessed Herman, of the order of St. Dominic, as Surius relates, had a singular devotion to the holy name of Mary, and reaped wonderful advantages from it : oftèn when alone he used to prostrate himself in his cell and repeat "Mary ! Mary ! Mary !" One of his friends, another devotee of the Mother of God, having witnessed Herman in one of those blissful moments, was amazed to see him so long prostrate, and with so much recollection. "What are you doing there ?" said he ; "what sentiments are you now occupied with ?" "I am collecting," said Herman, transported with delight, "the delicious fruits of the sweet name of Mary ; I pronounce it, and it would seem that the most fragrant flowers and sweetest perfumes embalm the air, while a certain virtue of which I am ignorant inundates my soul with a joy and gladness all divine ; here I forget my pains, here I rest from my labors, hence I should never wish to go forth, that I might incessantly repeat the august name of Mary ! Mary ! Mary !"

Prayer.

O Jesus ! O Mary ! may your names live in my heart, and in the hearts of all men. May I forget all other names in order to remember your admirable names alone. O Jesus, my Redeemer ! O Mary, my Mother ! when my last hour shall come, when my soul shall be at the eve of its departure from the world, grant, I beseech you, that my last words may be, "Jesus, Mary, I love you ! Jesus, Mary, I give you my heart and my soul." Amen.

ORIGIN OF THE SCAPULAR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

SPIRIT AND ADVANTAGES OF THAT DEVOTION, AND DUTIES TO BE PERFORMED.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ; and with a robe of justice he hath covered me. *Isaias lxi. 10.*

I—OF THE ORIGIN OF THIS DEVOTION.



THE institution of the scapular is to be attributed to St. Simon Stock, an Englishman by birth, one of the ornaments of the Church in the thirteenth century.

Having retired to the desert at the age of twelve years, he passed thirty days in the practice of the most austere penance and contemplation. Meeting with some Carmelite religious, called Brothers of the Virgin on account of their tender devotion toward her, he took their habit, and went to pass six years of profound solitude on Mount Carmel. On his return to Europe, having become general of his order in 1245, as he was one day asking the blessed Mother of God, in the simplicity of his confidence, to grant him a mark of her protection, she appeared to him in great glory, surrounded by myriads of angels, and holding in her hand a scapular, or covering for the shoulders, which she gave to him, saying these words : " My well-beloved son, receive this scapular, which I present to you and to all the members of your order ; it is by this sign that I wish you should be hereafter recognized as my children ; it is a privilege granted you and all the children of Mount Carmel, so that whoever shall die invested with this holy habit shall have an assurance of my protection in escaping everlasting flames (*' In quo quis moriens æternum non patietur incendium '*) ; it is a mark of predestination, a safeguard in dangers, an emblem of peace, and the symbol of perpetual alliance." This vision has been so well attested by all the evidences that could guarantee its authenticity, that the wise Pope Benedict XIV. has not hesitated to say, " We believe it true, and we are of the opinion that all the world should hold it as true " (*hanc visionem veram credimus, veramque habendam ab omnibus arbitramur*).* We will not then be astonished that this devo-

* *De Beat.*, iv. 2, 9; *et de Fest.*, ii. 9.

tion has been rapidly propagated, and that it continues to flourish throughout the Catholic world.

2—OF THE ADVANTAGES WHICH IT PROCURES.

I. It entitles us to the promises of the blessed Virgin, that is to say that the scapular serves, 1st, as a pledge of a more intimate and lasting union with the august Queen of heaven ; 2d, it protects us as a celestial armor, in the dangers both of soul and body ; 3d, it becomes for us a preservative against the flames of hell, by assuring to us, during life and at the hour of death, the most special aid of the powerful Mother of God. We can undoubtedly be saved without wearing the scapular, but with it salvation is easier and more certain ; what more is necessary to attach us to it ?

II. We participate in all the good works of the Carmelite order, as is expressed in the formula of the reception : the first says, " In virtue of the power which has been intrusted to me, I receive and admit you to the full participation of the prayers, penances, suffrages, alms, watchings, masses, offices and other spiritual duties, which are performed, day and night, in every part of the world, through the mercy of Jesus Christ, by all the religious of the holy order of Mount Carmel."

III. We gain numerous indulgences.

Plenary Indulgences.

1. On the day of our reception. (Paul V.)
2. On the feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel, the 16th of July, or on one of the days of the octave. (Paul III., Benedict.)
3. On the day of each month when there is a procession in honor of the blessed Virgin, when we assist at it (Paul V.)
4. At the article of death, provided we pronounce, at least with the heart, the holy name of Jesus.
5. Any time that the other confraternities enjoy any plenary indulgence. (Sixtus IV. ; Clement VIII.)

Partial Indulgences.

1. An indulgence of five years and five quarantines to members who accompany the holy viaticum, and pray for the sick.
2. Of five years and five quarantines to all those who communicate once a month, and pray according to the intentions of our holy father, the Pope.
3. Of one hundred days every time we perform a spiritual or corporal work of mercy.
4. Of forty days when we recite each day seven " *Paters* " and " *Aves*,"

etc.—all these different indulgences are applicable to the souls in purgatory.

*Indulgences styled Sabbatine.**

“It is not only in this life,” says the Roman breviary, “the blessed Virgin Mary shows herself favorable to the children of Mount Carmel; it is also in the life to come, for her power and her goodness extend everywhere. All those who wear the scapular, are careful to recite the few prayers prescribed, and preserve chastity according to their state of life, may hope (*pie creditur*) that, should they have to suffer the fire of purgatory, Mary will come to console them in her maternal tenderness, and cause them to enter their heavenly country as soon as possible (*quantocius*); especially on Saturday, the day consecrated to her, adds Pope Paul V., in a bull of 1612.

When a true Christian is at the point of death, with what earnestness does he recommend himself to his parents and friends, that they may abridge by their prayers the time of expiation which he dreads? But will they be faithful to this injunction? Will they pray for him? will they procure for him the prayers of others? He knows not, and has too often reason to doubt it; men so soon forget. The servant of Mary has no such fears—he has only to observe some easy practices to be sure of relief; for Mary does not forget, as men do. She remembers her children, she remembers also her promises; and soon, introduced into glory, they feel the happiness of having been faithful to her.

3—OF THE DUTIES TO BE FULFILLED.

The devotion of the scapular imposes no obligation under pain of sin; but the privileges which it grants are not obtained but on certain conditions.

I. In order to be entitled to a more special protection of the blessed Virgin Mary, the merits of the Carmelites and the plenary and partial indulgences, three things are necessary: 1st, to be received by a priest duly authorized; 2d, to wear the scapular constantly; 3d, to be inscribed upon the register of the confraternity.

II. To obtain the Sabbatine indulgence, chastity must be observed according to each one's state, and the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin or the Canonical Office recited. The office may be supplied by the fasts of the Church and abstinence on Wednesday and Saturday; or, if these fasts and abstinences are not possible, by some works equally painful and meritorious, as prescribed by a priest authorized to receive members, or

* A term derived from the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday.

by the confessor. Any one neglecting to gain the Sabbatine indulgence, does not lose the benefit of the other privileges.

In order to gain any plenary indulgence, confession, Communion, and prayer, according to the intentions of the Church, are requisite.

Remarks.

1. It does not suffice to carry the scapular in the pocket, around the waist, or on the arm ; it should be worn around the neck, or as a scarf, the two parts separate.

2. It is of no consequence whether it be worn over or under the dress.

3. When the first is worn out or lost, another may be taken, which may be blessed by any priest ; but this blessing is not necessary.

4. Those who, having received the scapular, have afterward abandoned it, even for a long time, have likewise only to take another of themselves, in order to enjoy again all their privileges.

4—OF THE SPIRIT OF THIS DEVOTION.

The scapular being the badge of a fraternity so dear to the blessed Virgin, we should endeavor, in carrying it, to clothe ourselves with all the sentiments which animated the immaculate Mary. This holy habit is an emblem of humility, detachment from the world, angelic chastity, and the pure love of God and our neighbors. Clients, let us not carry in vain the livery of our august Queen ; children, let us render ourselves worthy of wearing, with purity of heart and body, this precious pledge of affection of our beloved Mother.

“My brethren,” said St. Simon Stock to all the children of Mount Carmel, “treasure up and think frequently in your hearts of the promises which the Mother of God has made us ; labor continually to assure your vocation by your good works, and to confirm by your conduct the choice which Mary has made of you for her children. Watch and persevere in the gratitude merited by so great a mercy of God in your regard. Pray without ceasing that the promise which has been given me may be accomplished in you to the glory of the most holy Trinity, of God the Father ; of Jesus Christ, His divine Son ; of the Holy Ghost, and of the most blessed Virgin, whose praises and happiness all nations are to celebrate, according to the prophecy contained in the sacred Scriptures, *Et beatam me dicent omnes generationes.*’ Amen.”

THE LITANY OF SAINTS, TO SOLICIT DIVINE LOVE.

Lord, have mercy on me.

Christ, have mercy on me.

Lord, have mercy on me.

Jesus, hear me.
 Jesus, graciously hear me.
 God the Father of Heaven, grant me your holy love.
 God the Son, Redeemer of the world, grant me your holy love.
 God the Holy Ghost, grant me your holy love.
 Holy Trinity, one God, grant me your holy love.
 Holy Mary, obtain for me the holy love of God.
 Holy Mother of God,
 Holy Virgin of virgins,
 St. Michael,
 St. Gabriel,
 St. Raphael,
 All ye holy angels and archangels,
 All ye holy orders of blessed spirits,
 St John the Baptist,
 All ye holy patriarchs and prophets,
 St. Peter,
 St. Paul,
 St. Andrew,
 St. James,
 St. John,
 St. Thomas,
 St. Philip,
 St. Bartholomew,
 St. Matthew,
 St. Simon,
 St. Thaddeus,
 St. Matthias,
 St. Barnaby,
 St. Luke,
 St. Mark,
 All ye holy apostles and evangelists,
 All ye holy disciples of the Lord,
 All ye holy innocents,
 St. Stephen,
 St. Laurence,
 St. Vincent,
 SS. Fabian and Sebastian,
 SS. John and Paul,
 SS. Cosmas and Damian,
 SS. Gervase and Protase,
 All ye holy martyrs,

Obtain for me the holy love of God.

St. Sylvester,
 St. Gregory,
 St. Ambrose,
 St. Augustine
 St. Jerome,
 St. Martin,
 St. Nicholas,
 St. Patrick,
 All ye holy pontiffs and confessors,
 All ye holy doctors,
 St. Anthony,
 St. Benedict,
 St. Bernard,
 St. Dominic,
 St. Francis,
 All ye holy priests and Levites,
 All ye holy monks and hermits,
 St. Mary Magdalen,
 St. Agatha,
 St. Lucy,
 St. Agnes,
 St. Cecily,
 St. Catherine,
 St. Anastasia,
 St. Bridget,
 All ye holy virgins and widows,
 All ye men and women, saints of God, vouchsafe to intercede with God
 to grant me His holy love.

Obtain for me the holy love of God.

Prayer.

Omnipotent and all-bountiful Lord, you who have so much love for us, and who do so ardently desire that we should love you, we humbly beseech you, by the love you bear the angels and saints, and by the love they bear you, and the prayers they offer you in our behalf, to vouchsafe to grant us your holy, pure, ardent, perfect, and constant love; in order that, having loved you in this world, as you have commanded, and as we desire, with our whole soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength, we may, after death, love you forever in heaven with all the blessed.

We beseech you through Jesus Christ our Lord, our God, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Ghost, for all eternity. Amen.

A prayer to our Lord to solicit divine love.

What you demand of me, O my God, is precisely the same as that which I solicit from you ; you require me to love you ; to love you is also what I most desire. O my Jesus, if I could communicate to myself this love for you that you are desirous I should have, I would give it to myself in abundance. Oh, what great love would I not give myself, in order to love you perfectly ! but you know, O divine Jesus, I cannot communicate it to myself.

It is you who can impart it, and with infinite power, at this very moment, fully and without difficulty. Ah ! may I have as much love as you can impart to me, and as you merit ; at least vouchsafe to bestow as much on me as you desire I should have : my heart is prepared, O my Jesus, my heart is prepared ; and if there be any hindrance to the plenitude of your divine love, you have the remedy in your own power—your grace is above all my sins ; vouchsafe to grant me this grace. I am unworthy of it, it is true ; I do not merit it, but you merit that I should love you perfectly, and in order to love you thus, I have need of this grace. Give me the means of which I have need in order to attain the end which you have intended for me ; give me this great grace, in order that I may render you this great love ; and to induce you to grant it, I beseech you, my Jesus, not to regard my past sins and irregularities, but to have compassion for them, and consider the great things that you have done and suffered in order that I might have love for you : act and operate in me according to the greatness of your sufferings, merit, power, and love. If you act thus, O my Jesus, toward me, I hope to perform on my part what you are desirous I should do ; that is, to love you as you desire, and as I wish, with the whole extent of your grace, and with all the powers of my soul. Amen.

A practice to preserve ourselves in the presence of God.

Say at each hour of the day the following :

My God, impress on my mind your divine presence.

My God, my all, I adore you here present ; I love you with my whole heart, for the love of yourself alone and above all things, because you are infinitely perfect and sovereignly amiable.

I love all men as myself, without excepting even my enemies, whom I love for the love of you.

Walk in the presence of God, and you will sin no more.

Meditate on these three words : "Eternity;" "always;" "forever."

The sinner will burn in hell, while the saints will be in bliss. Choose hell or paradise.

My God, save me.

A prayer to the Holy Ghost to obtain divine love.

Divine Spirit, wholly spirit and love, love of the Father and of the Son, personal, substantial, eternal, and infinite love! Love, ah, love! divine love, incomparable love, ah, love! either attract us to you, or may we attract you to us, to convert us wholly into love for you, that we may henceforth love only you.

Come to us, divine love, come to us; behold our hearts which you have sought so long, and which were hitherto closed against you, behold them, at length, wholly disposed and prepared to receive you.

Divine love, you have sought us, while we eluded you; will you elude us, now that we seek you? Ah! you are not changeable, like us. As you have hitherto loved and sought us, you still love and seek us now; it is you who induce us to desire to seek you. Alas! without you, without your attraction, we would still wander, and lose ourselves amidst the mire of creatures. Come, then, divine love, come, dear love, we conjure you, to possess our hearts which sigh after you.

Veni sancte Spiritus, repletuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende. We have never been inflamed, as we now are, with the ardent desire to possess you; you alone have inspired us; you alone have excited us. Come with your grace, and render yourself master of our hearts, which claim, which desire only you; we breathe only after you. Ah! vouchsafe to hear us, and reject not our prayers.

Come, oh, come speedily, in order that, having attracted you to us during life, you may attract us to you after death, and that we may pass from love to love; from the love of grace here below to the beatific love of heaven, in which all other employments cease: there we shall be all beloved and all loving, all ardor of love in the divine flames of paradise, which will dispel our *ennui*, dissipate all our pains, and forever fill us with ineffable delight.

Ah! when shall this be, divine love; when shall we possess this incomparable happiness?

We shall sigh after, and will love so much, with your assistance, during the remainder of our life in this world, that we trust, after our death, there may be no interruption or delay to this perfect love. Amen, divine love, Amen.

A prayer of St. Bernard to the Holy Virgin.

Remember, O meek and merciful Virgin Mary, that it was never heard that you ever abandoned those who, in their affliction or necessities, have placed themselves under your powerful protection, implored your aid, or solicited your assistance; therefore, animated with the same confidence,

O queen of Virgins, our tender Mother, I have recourse to you, though a miserable sinner—I, sighing, prostrate myself at your feet. Refuse not, august Mother of my God, to listen favorably to my prayer; I humbly solicit your powerful intercession; deign to grant it to me; be propitious to the supplication of a wretched creature, who hopes to obtain everything through your mediation. Amen.

THE GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE EVER-BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ADMIRABLE LOVE GOD BORE ST. JOSEPH.

THE painter who first put a lily into St. Joseph's hand appears to have been inspired. Flowers have something lovely and charming in them; and it is considered an honor no less to bear their name than to bear them in our escutcheon or coat of arms. Hence the city of Florence deems it a great honor to bear the name of that rich flower which adorns her delicious gardens.

The glorious name of Rose is also justly entailed upon the island of Rhodes, because it is so beautiful and pleasant that it resembles a rose in the spring.

All know that Susa, the chief city in the kingdom of Assuerus, pretended to greater fortune than all the other cities of Asia, because Susa signifies a lily, whereby she claims a right above all other cities, styling herself the "City of Lilies."

There are a few of the interpreters of the Holy Scripture who do not take notice that the city of Nazareth bore the name of flowers, because it was the residence of Jesus Nazareus, that is, Jesus of the "City of Flowers," and the native town of Mary and Joseph, the three fairest flowers in the garden of the holy Catholic Church.

We read also, in ancient annals, that the name and sight of flowers have been looked upon as a most propitious omen; for, as Plutarch recounts in the life of Sylla, the Roman army being drawn up in battle, ready to charge the enemy, an agreeable gale, arising, brought a great quantity of lilies, roses, violets, flower-de-luces, daffodils, and several other sorts of flowers, from the neighboring fields and gardens, which, falling upon the shields and head-pieces of the Roman soldiers, they believed it a presage of good fortune, and a sign of crowning them conquerors beforehand.

At the battle of Lepanto, roses were sold in the public piazza, in the month of October, as red and fresh as they are in June; from which

all felt assured that the Christians should succeed against the Turks. This lily, therefore, which St. Joseph bears, betokens those extraordinary qualities and privileges wherewith he is enriched; and, therefore, the painter who first put it into his hand was, as I have said, inspired probably to do so, since this branch of lilies silently suggests whatever can be said of him; and even manifests all those wonders that lie hidden in this great saint, as I shall endeavor to explain.

Wherefore learn the price and excellency of the lily, and thereby you will know the eminent and admirable perfection of St. Joseph, and perceive, also, that wonderful and almost incredible love which God had for him; for, as a lily is the grace and ornament of a garden of pleasure, as it is the beautiful masterpiece that draws the eyes and charms the hearts of the beholders at their first entrance, so, according to St. Austin, there are no less charming lilies in the garden of heaven. "Among heavenly flowers, neither lilies nor roses," says he, "are wanting, that are less charming to their beholders."

Let us see what a beautiful and sweet lily St. Joseph is. Since the heavenly spouse is highly pleased with a feast of lilies, therefore St. Joseph had the honor to be invited to it, next after the bridegroom Himself. "My beloved is mine," says the spouse, "and I am his, who feeds among lilies." Behold, then, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, three glorious lilies indeed, that assist at this banquet of lilies—the honor and beauty of heaven and earth, and the most amiable of all created objects. But before we contemplate St. Joseph, let us take a view of the perfections of that lily, which is an emblem of him.

The lily surpasses all other odoriferous flowers in growth and beauty; she raises her beautiful head upon a straight stalk, many feet higher than any other flowers do, as St. Joseph also, in the height of justice and perfection, surmounts all other saints: wherefore, when we behold St. Joseph leading his reputed Son Jesus in one hand, and the blessed Virgin Mary in the other, we cannot but admire to what a height of dignity God has raised him, and must own, that none after the ever-glorious Virgin Mary was ever raised to the like, and that such a dignity as this is not given in the house of God, but according to the sanctity and graces the person raised to it is a partaker, and which the ministry he is employed in requires.

The first and highest degree of all honors and dignities upon earth was due to Jesus, the Son of God incarnate; the second to the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God; and the third to St. Joseph, spouse of the blessed Virgin Mary, and foster-father to the Son of God. Wherefore, according to the most devout and learned doctor of the Church, St. Thomas, our lily, St. Joseph, is raised also, after Jesus and Mary, to the



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highest dignity upon earth: "By how much," says he, "he excelled others, by so much he was raised to a higher dignity than others were."

The lily also is an emblem of pure love, and springs from a heart, the source of love, which its root resembles; and in this it is also like St. Joseph, who, next to Mary, exceeds all creatures in active and passive love. His heart was most inflamed by being replenished with the love of God toward him, which moved His divine Majesty to raise him to the highest dignity on earth, next to Jesus and Mary: and St. Joseph casts back these flames toward God, by a faithful correspondence and fidelity to those high functions to which He had chosen him, which rendered him most amiable both to heaven and earth, as I shall hereafter prove. So that we see how the lily is a lively emblem of our saint, and that this lily he holds in his hand intimates something that is great and that is beyond our power to express. The very number, also, of the lily's leaves betokens those six wonderful privileges which the extraordinary love of God induced Him to bestow upon our lily, St. Joseph.

Margaret, queen of Navarre, took for her device a crowned lily, at which two rich pendants of jewels were hung, with this motto, "The wonderful work of nature," which device may also be well applied to St. Joseph. The lily is his ensign, and is not only the wonder of nature, but of grace also, upon which hung those two rich jewels, Jesus and Mary, whom he led in each hand, being the foster-father to the one, and husband to the other. He therefore justly deserves to be crowned, since, in the love of God, he bears away the prize from all in the Church militant and triumphant: so that none must dare to dispute the right of coronation with him, he having those high prerogatives bestowed upon him, from which all others, except Jesus and Mary, are excluded. The part and portion, also, that he has of divine love, in this triumph, is very remarkable, and gives him a right to that title which his great progenitor, David, uses in the 44th Psalm, "The triumph by lilies;" making him a partner in this triumph with the two other lilies, Jesus and Mary, these being all and always of a company. Wherefore, since this triumph partly belongs to him, I may conclude him a conqueror with the other two, and that this his triumph is as much above all that of the other saints as he exceeds them in those wonderful graces and prerogatives which the love of God bestowed upon him. This will easily be perceived by displaying the six leaves of our lily, and discovering thereby the six extraordinary prerogatives which the love of God has bestowed upon him, above all other saints, excepting Mary.

The head or blossom of this flower contains, as I said, six white resplendent leaves, which represent the six particular and extraordinary prerogatives that shine in St. Joseph beyond all other saints; wherefore it will be sufficient only to open and display these six leaves, to let you

see the wonderful things they contain, and thereby both charm your imagination with St. Joseph's perfections, and raise your affections to such a height with love and devotion to him as he truly deserves. Varieties, as we find by experience, contain a certain lustre within themselves that cause admiration, and therefore they need not borrow words nor discourses to set themselves out. A beauty enriched by nature, as you know, needs neither paint nor patch; a diamond of great price wants no foil to set it off; a cabinet, also, filled with rich and sparkling jewels, declares its own value, and therefore needs no other commendation than to set it open, containing within itself its own light, lustre, and beauty. The leaves I am about to display of this glorious lily are of the same stamp or nature; so that by giving you only a sight of them, as of so many unheard-of prerogatives, they cannot but raise your admiration of his perfections, and charm and move you to be devout to him.

The first leaf or prerogative I lay open cannot but cause a strange admiration; for is it not wonderful that a son should choose his own father? It is a wonder never before heard of in the world since its first beginning. Read the Roman annals, turn over all the histories of the universe, you will find nothing like to this; and were this a practice that could be brought into the world, what a change would it make in it! Poor, deformed, imperfect, and vicious men would never be chosen for fathers; none but such as were rich, prudent, virtuous and every way accomplished would be made choice of: whence we may conclude that a person who is chosen by one that is very prudent must needs be very good, beautiful, and most accomplished in all perfections.

Now, to apply this to our lily, our glorious St. Joseph: you know that the Son of God, by right of His divine existence, had a being before His human birth, and therefore had the advantage of time, in which He might choose His father; and supposing His design to choose one among men, it is certain His infinite wisdom would make choice of one most perfect and eminent in sanctity, and of one that was most fit for, and most capable of, so high a dignity; for if a worm like myself would make choice of the bravest of men for its father, had it an occasion offered to do so, can we imagine that the Son of God, the eternal Wisdom, who judges of things as they are, knows the value and depth of hearts, and sees the worth of all creatures, would not choose the most perfect of all men for His father? To think otherwise would be to rank His wisdom beneath our own; wherefore, since He has chosen St. Joseph before all others—since His knowledge and love moved Him to this election, must not this choice He made of him be an evident proof that he was eminent in all perfections, especially since the divine Wisdom Himself chose him for His father?

Let us now pass on, and take a view of the second leaf, or second prerogative of our glorious lily. He was not only chosen by the divine Wisdom to be His father, but even to be father to Him who was the Son of God; so that by this election which the eternal Wisdom made, Joseph had God for his son. Who could have thought it possible that a man could be father to the Son of God? or could ever have imagined that man might with truth say to the Son of God, "You are my son"? or that man should arrive at such a high pitch of dignity as to bear the relation of paternity to the Word incarnate, which, in some measure, resembled the paternity of the eternal Father to His eternal and uncreated Son? Oh, wonderful dignity! Joseph foster-father of Jesus; foster-father of the Son of God incarnate. Having the honor to be the father to Him on earth, to whom God is Father in heaven. But to evidence and make this truth more clear:

We must know that Jesus was not his son by nature, but by the lawful right that accrued to St. Joseph by Jesus' being son to his spouse, the blessed Virgin Mary; for by his being her son, He was produced in and born of that flesh which, by right of marriage, was St. Joseph's, and was under his power and jurisdiction. So that, according to the common axiom of the civil law, that says, "Whatsoever grows in, or is built upon another's soil, belongs to the owner thereof," this title was strong enough to give him the right and title of a father, and caused our blessed Lady to style him His father, even to her Son Himself, when she said, "Behold, with how much grief your father and I have sought after you." (Luke ii. 48.) He also, by His answer, seemed to own him for His father upon earth, when He said, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke, verse 49.) Meaning His heavenly Father, as if He would have said, "You have reason for what you say; but you know that my first and chief obligation is, to comply with the will of my heavenly Father."

But this is not all: St. Joseph was not only the father of Jesus, because he was called so, or because he had that relationship to the blessed Virgin I spoke of, but because he wanted nothing that is found in a true paternity, or fatherly right. He had all that care, affection, and authority, that any father ever had, or ever will have, in relation to a son; for, as St. John Damascene says, "St. Joseph had all that could entitle him to the right of paternity, except that of generation;" which, according to Rupertus the abbot, "God the Father supplied, by infusing into the husband of Mary a paternal love of her son Jesus." By which infusion, St. Joseph participated in all graces that can be named or imagined: for if God had a design to love a man after the best manner imaginable, or to give him the highest place of glory in heaven, what more could He do

for him than to constitute him to bear the office of a father over His only Son? than which nothing can be more excellent, nothing more rare or admirable; for, by giving him this office, he gives all the qualities necessary for it, and gives him power even to call the Son of God his son, causing the effect to correspond to the name.

The third miraculous leaf, or prerogative of this lily, is, that being man, he should become husband to the Mother of God. Oh, wonder of wonders! when we would comprehend, in a few words, all the wonderful perfections and prerogatives of the blessed Virgin Mary, we make use of St. Matthew's words, "Mary, of whom Jesus was born." (Matt. i. 16.) For as, by styling her Mother of Jesus, we comprehend all that can be said of her, so St. Joseph, by being styled husband to the Mother of God, comprehends, under this title, all other dignities and perfections whatsoever. So that a greater than this cannot be given him, as St. John Damascene well observes, when he says, "You call him the husband of Mary; this is such a title as cannot be explicated, and more than this cannot be said of him."

Mary, spouse to Joseph, doth, in plentitude of grace, surpass both men and angels; and has not her husband, think you, the like endowments, since God judged him a fit match for her, and for this end gave him so great an abundance of grace, virtue and sanctity, that neither men nor angels ever had the like, thereby to fit him to be spouse and guide to the Virgin Mother; God judging it fit, that in her right, he should partake of all her honors, favors, and dignities. If, therefore, she be a princess, he is a prince, and he also is king, wherever she is queen; for God, who designed to raise Mary to the quality and honor of the Mother of God, at the same time designed her a husband like to herself, whom he loved above all men upon earth, and therefore endowed him with all graces suitable to such a dignity. Oh, thrice happy Joseph, thus chosen by God, and thus fitted and advanced to be the husband of the Mother of God, as His best beloved, next to Jesus and Mary.

The fourth miraculous leaf or prerogative of this lily, is, that he is at once both a father and a virgin; which is so singular a prerogative, that it is allowed to none but him. There have been many virgin husbands; but of virgin fathers there never has been any one but St. Joseph, who is spouse also of a virgin mother; which singular prerogative was reserved by God only for His best-beloved Joseph and Mary, God lodging His special favor wherever he places His particular affection.

The fifth miraculous leaf or prerogative of this lily, is, that St. Joseph, being a creature, should take care of his Creator, for he was father of the family—foster-father, tutor, and guardian of the Word incarnate; so that the angels who beheld the Son of God in the bosom of His eternal Father

in heaven, seeing Him also in the arms of St. Joseph upon earth, might very well cry out with admiration and astonishment, "Behold the Governor of the universe, governed by a man! Behold Him, who carefully nourishes all creatures, nourished by His creature! Behold Him, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, sheltered under the roof and protection of a poor inhabitant of Nazareth!" And these angels might very well have addressed to St. Joseph the same admonition that Methodius did to the Mother of God, in the following words: "O nursing-father to Him who feeds all creatures! O rich Joseph, to whom God Himself becomes a beggar! Thrice happy art thou, who hast Him for thy debtor who lends to every one whatsoever He possesses; for all creatures are indebted to God for their being, and for everything they enjoy, but to oblige thee, God will become obliged to thee, and make Himself thy debtor." Wherefore, let us join our admirations and congratulations with those of the angels, saying, "O thrice happy Joseph, favorite of the court of heaven! O best-beloved of God! since He has placed so great a confidence in thee as to commit His only Son to thy care and conduct."

The sixth and last miraculous leaf, or prerogative of this lily, is, that he is one of the persons of the created trinity, which is next in dignity to the uncreated; and wonderfully, also, resembles all the three persons of the uncreated Trinity, as the lily also does, which he bears in his hand; for, in a white resplendent cup or throne, it includes three golden sceptres, all three equal in odor, beauty, and shape, issuing from the middle or heart of the flower; which resemblance gives no little honor to the lily, since it makes a similitude whereby to declare the majesty of this divine mystery; nor is it any less honor to our lily, St. Joseph, to resemble the three divine persons—Father, Son and Holy Ghost—which he does after such a manner as might raise a jealousy even in the angels, to see that God has bestowed upon man such a resemblance of that mystery, which in itself is the most wonderful of all mysteries. Did they not adore, with all possible submission and resignation, His divine will and pleasure in all things? For, as the eternal Father is the father of the uncreated Word, so St. Joseph is the reputed father of the Word created; and as God the Son is the Redeemer of mankind, so St. Joseph is His coadjutor in this great work, since he employs all his cares, all the labors of his hands, and all the sweat of his brow, to gain wherewithal to nourish and maintain our most merciful Redeemer. Lastly, as the Holy Ghost is the spouse of Mary the Mother of God, so St. Joseph is also her spouse. What, therefore, can be a greater subject of jealousy to the angels than this? But they know him to be a favorite of God, and rejoice as much in the honor God bestows upon him, as in their own; and honor him as a prince of their grand master's court, and as one He will have thus honored.

After having thus displayed these miraculous leaves, and declared the wonderful prerogatives of our lily, I cannot refrain from blessing and praising divine Providence, for inspiring the painter to put a lily into St. Joseph's hand, by the help of which the same Providence has been pleased to inspire me to explain his merits and wonderful prerogatives ; and if, heretofore, an ingenious artist did so cut and dispose the leaves of several flowers that they made a very beautiful picture of Flora, why may not I, quickened by St. Bernard's fancy, when he says, "So many lilies, so many virtues" (*Ser. 70 in Cant.*), endeavor to make a lively picture of St. Joseph's virtues out of the different sorts of lilies, and the different signification of their colors ! By the white lily is represented his chastity ; by the yellow, his charity ; by the carnation, his mortification ; and by the green one, his hope. "So many lilies, so many virtues." Let, therefore, this declaration of his virtues, joined with the rest of those wonderful prerogatives I have before declared, convince us of his extraordinary perfection, and give us an assurance that there is neither in heaven nor earth, any creature above St. Joseph, or that is more favored by God, except Jesus and Mary.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE WONDERFUL QUALITIES, WHEREBY GOD RENDERED ST. JOSEPH AMIABLE
ABOVE ALL OTHERS, EXCEPT JESUS AND MARY.



ARIUS MONTANUS, a famous antiquary, admired for his knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, kept in his cabinet of rarities a medal that he greatly valued for its antiquity and prophetic signification, which was a piece of money called by the Jews a shekel ; on one side of which was represented such a vessel as the chrism or sacred oil was kept in, in the temple, with this inscription on it, "The Genealogy ;" and on the reverse of the medal, a double rank of pearls, forty-one in number, in the centre of which were these words, "The time of anointing." By the number of the pearls were signified the progenitors of Christ, who were fitly represented by such precious jewels, who were in all forty-one, Himself, the anointed, being included.

I willingly make use of this erudition to begin my description of the amiable qualities of St. Joseph ; who was one of these pearls, to which he is fitly compared, since you know how much this jewel is esteemed for its resplendent beauty and heavenly color ; and therefore one of his devout admirers could not find a title that more fitly expressed his beauty, than to call him "Lovely pearl," as the Church styles his spouse "Lovely Mother ;" both being parents of the amiable and lovely Jesus, whom His royal progenitor styles, in his psalm of triumph, "The most beautiful of the sons of men." (Ps. xlv. 3.) We know, among other perfections, beauty of body is highly esteemed, and that, combined with good natural parts, and a virtuous disposition of mind, nothing can be more desired. I shall therefore endeavor to show how St. Joseph excelled in all these.

To begin, then, with his beauty of body : in this he resembled his spouse, and as she surpassed all other beauties, so in beauty St. Joseph was her consort ; in which truth I agree with those learned men who hold for certain that he was no less excellent in all perfections of body than in those of his mind ; for we cannot imagine that Jesus would permit so strict an alliance of His beautiful Mother with a man who had any personal defect ; for what father is there that chooses not the most accomplished person to marry his daughter ? Gerson affirms that in his face or countenance he resembled and was very like to Jesus, the most beautiful among the sons of men. "The face of Jesus," says he, "resembled the face of

Joseph." And St. Bernard testifies, also, that he was like to that unparalleled beauty, the blessed Virgin Mary : " Joseph," says he, " was made to the likeness of the blessed Virgin his spouse." So that they are all alike in beauty, in which they excelled all others. Now let us descend to particulars.

His face cast forth such rays of beauty and sweetness as charmed all who beheld him. One sight of him was sufficient to win the affections of the beholders, and move them to devotion. This, Sister Jane of the Angels, prioress of the Ursulines at Lodun testified, when the painter asked her, after St. Joseph's apparition and the miraculous cure of her health, how they should draw him? Having described to them his forehead, eyes, nose, chin, beard, hair, and all the rest of his features, after the best manner she was able, she added, " Make use, in fine, of all the advantages your art admits of, or is able to perform ; yet, after all you can do, you will never be able to express the beauty of his countenance." And when they asked her if he was as handsome as such and such a person, she replied, " Make him as much handsomer than these you speak of as you are able, yet, after all, you will come short of his beauty, it being impossible truly to express it as it is." I must, therefore, forbear to endeavor to express, by pen, what they were not able to express by their pencils, and conclude with this short description, that in beauty he was next to Jesus and Mary, whose beauties were above what can be expressed by words, and are beyond any idea or imagination.

Yet, to give you some glimpse or shadow of his beauty, I am assured that when they showed this devout Ursuline his picture in Paris, as she passed by, which Hurllet, the famous engraver, had made to represent the miracle of her recovery, she acknowledged the face had many features like his, and that it had some resemblance to that majesty she beheld in St. Joseph, when he appeared to her, and at the same time perfectly cured her ; which moved me to get a plate after that, although far smaller, which the engraver has performed with so much success that it contains such a majesty of sweetness as to strike a reverence and affection into the beholders, and gives them a glimpse or shadow of his heavenly beauty.

Moreover, an agreeable exterior, a sweet and pleasant conversation, are no less charming than beauty, which St. Joseph had in very great perfection, as well from his natural temper as from the many years' conversation he had enjoyed with the Word incarnate, and with the Queen of angels ; for in him the least defect of this kind would have been notorious, he being designed by God to treat and converse with those kings, whom He inspired and led by a star to adore His Son ; and not only to treat with kings, but even with angels themselves, sent to him upon several embassies : to inform him of the mysteries of the incarnation, of the

name he should give his son, of Herod's design against His life, to warn him to flee with Him and His mother into Egypt, to give him notice of Herod's death, and that he might return home, although by a different way from that he took when he fled into Egypt: whom, moreover, He designed to be the constant companion of the Queen of angels, and even of the Son and Mother of God; and therefore He endowed him with a great, noble and generous mind, and replenished his heart with such a heavenly joy as at once discovered itself in his countenance, and gave a grace and ornament to every action he performed; whereby he gained everyone's affection and esteem, yet he was not thereby the least puffed up with any self-esteem; nor did he, as it ordinarily happens, become less affable upon account of these honors done him, but received them with so bashful a modesty and so angelic a sweetness as declared that he looked upon himself as undeserving of the esteem and love they showed him; admiring and regarding their goodness, not his own merits; so that his sweet disposition, excellent humor, beautiful and pleasant countenance, breathed such a humility, joined with such winning and angelic modesty, as rendered his conversation pleasant both to men and angels, nay, even to Christ Himself. Thus the interpretation of the patriarch Joseph's dream was verified in our Joseph; for the Sun of Justice, and even the Son of God, and she who was as beautiful as the moon, Mother of God, admired and revered him.

But all these are only exterior ornaments, and nothing in comparison to his interior—I mean those virtues that adorned his soul; for nothing is so lovely, or renders any object so worthy of love, as virtue. And it was this made St. Joseph gain so great a conquest over the hearts of all that knew him; for he was charitable, patient, meek, humble, devout, obedient, and all that either the reputed father of Jesus, or the spouse of Mary ought to have been; and although he had not of himself been so eminent in these virtues, yet the constant conversation with such eminent patterns of them as Jesus and Mary were could not but render him most eminent in the same: for, as one who lives in a perfumer's shop does not only take pleasure in the smell of the perfumes around him, but is thereby perfumed himself, so the virtues of St. Joseph were increased by theirs with whom he constantly lived and conversed.

What I have said cannot but raise in your hearts, I am sure, such a love and devotion to this great saint as theirs was, whose examples I shall hereafter recount, and at the same time show how great this love and devotion ought to be, next to our love and devotion to Jesus and Mary.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE GREAT LOVE AND SPECIAL DEVOTION WE OWE ST. JOSEPH.

NONE can refuse to pay this debt of love to our amiable St. Joseph—to this object of the love of Jesus and Mary, and to one so highly beloved by God Himself; for can the eternal Wisdom be deceived? can Mary engage her affections without reason? or can we charge God with partiality, because He loves Joseph next to Jesus and Mary? Such thoughts as these can never enter into a pious heart: wherefore we must conclude that, since he was so amiable, they could not elsewhere lodge their affections better, or give a present of their love to any one more deserving than St. Joseph.

Let us, therefore, see how they loved him, and endeavor to love him as they did; believing that God has rendered him lovely above others, to move us to love Him above others, and to follow His own divine affection toward St. Joseph.

We shall know that we are proficient in this divine school of love when we love St. Joseph above all others next to Jesus and Mary, in which consists that special devotion we ought to have to him. I say not this to lessen your love and devotion to any other saint, but to augment your love and devotion to him who, in regard of his merits, holds the first rank in heaven and earth, after Christ and His Virgin Mother, not only upon account of the love that Jesus and Mary bore him, but of the love that God has manifested toward him, by those high prerogatives He has bestowed upon him; not but that God has also very highly favored many other saints of His heavenly court: such as St. John the Baptist, whom the divine Word declared the "Greatest among the sons of women" (Matt. xi. 11); and such as the apostles also were, who are pillars of His Church, and like stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of heaven, as well as several other saints like unto these; but we must remember, as the learned and devout Gerson says, that if the first rank and hierarchy in heaven is that of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so the second is this of Jesus, Mary and Joseph; and that all other saints are of a lower rank, and of a different hierarchy. These other great saints hold, indeed, the first place in their rank and hierarchy, according to the ordinary law of love; but not in that of the order of the hypostatical union, and in the mystery of the incarnation, wherein only those are comprised who most

nearly relate to Jesus and Mary, namely, St. Joseph, who completes this created trinity, as I before signified, and therefore makes a hierarchy apart, of far greater excellence and dignity than the rest.

But, to set forth more at large St. Joseph's dignity, I will here declare the source and order of this hierarchy, which comprehends none but Jesus, Mary and Joseph. We must, therefore, observe, that God, who is admirable in His works, was not content only to make man after His own image and likeness, but would also make a created image and likeness of the uncreated Trinity in these three wonderful personages—Jesus, Mary and Joseph, whom He chose for the mystery of the incarnation; so that as the three persons of the uncreated Trinity have all coöperated in the sacred mystery of the incarnation, so they would also make an illustrious and created emblem of themselves, to coöperate likewise toward the same mystery. For example: first, as the two natures of Jesus Christ, His soul, body and divinity are united in the person of the Son of God, so by the union of the admirable love that these three persons—Jesus, Mary and Joseph—have to one another, they contributed to it upon earth. Mary bears the image of God the Father; Jesus is the Son, according to His humanity, in a just likeness to what He is in heaven, as He is the Word or Son of God: and St. Joseph represents the Holy Ghost, in the quality of spouse to the blessed Virgin, or in the love he hath for Jesus and Mary; which he manifested by the care he took both of the one and of the other.

What affections, therefore, are due to this admirable and venerable created trinity, as the learned Gerson styles it, either in general or in particular? And if the greatest honor be conferred upon them by this title, why ought not the greatest love to accompany it? If love attend merit, what can be next the uncreated Trinity but the created? and next to the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, but Jesus, and Mary, and Joseph, who ought to have the next place in our affections? And as it would be preposterous for any one first to love God the Father, second, to love God the Son, and then, breaking the order of the Trinity, to love one of the angels—thus placing the Holy Ghost in the same rank with these holy spirits, so inferior to Him in all things—if this would be impious, he would refuse Him, by denying his first affection to the Holy Ghost, the first of all possible devotions, which He deservedly challenges as His right; it being an undoubted truth that we cannot render a greater honor than by love, and by offering our heart in homage. Wherefore, as none can divide their love to the three persons in the uncreated Trinity, they ought to follow a similar rule in their respect to the created trinity, and love Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, after the uncreated Trinity, more than any other object, however so perfect; and therefore to love Jesus and Mary, and in the

next place to love any saint or angel, would be to break the order of love, and become injurious to this created trinity, robbing it of that honor God has given it, and it would be to displace St. Joseph, who ought to have the third rank in the sanctuary of our affections ; which would clearly be no less a defect of judgment than of devotion. Wherefore our greatest devotion, after that to Jesus and Mary, ought to be to St. Joseph, without any fear or apprehension that any saint or angel will thereby be dishonored ; they all giving him the precedence, knowing very well what honor and devotion is due to the spouse of Mary, the Mother of God, and to the third person of the amiable created trinity—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT WAS THE REASON THAT IT WAS SO LONG BEFORE ST. JOSEPH, THE MOST AMIABLE AND BEST-BELOVED OF GOD, HAD SUCH LOVE AND DEVOTION PAID HIM AS WAS DUE TO THE GREATNESS OF HIS MERITS ?



ALTHOUGH I dare not presume to penetrate into God's hidden counsels, nor pretend to a knowledge of His divine secrets by permitting my curiosity to make inquiry why God has not permitted the wonderful splendor of St. Joseph's glory to break out and shine forth until these latter years, permitting so many years since the incarnation to pass without any extraordinary knowledge or acknowledgment of the wonderful merits of the holy spouse of the Mother of God ; yet I hope it will not appear a rashness in me to assign some motives that appear very reasonable, since all that I pretend to herein is only to declare my own thoughts, grounded upon such observations as are taken from the ordinary conduct which divine Providence has used upon similar accidental occasions ; and hereby, also, to promote a devotion to St. Joseph, which was the chief design I had in writing this treatise, that, by enlightening the understanding of his clients, I may prepare a way for St. Joseph to gain a higher place in their affections.

We know that his feast has not long been kept with the solemnity with which it is now observed, and that in the primitive ages no mention is made of any particular devotion to this saint, nor such notice taken of his canonization as is now in practice concerning other saints. I cannot, therefore, but own that this marked devotion toward St. Joseph is only of late standing, since the marks of honor shown him in several places are but of a late date ; as we may see by the confraternities, chapels, and altars erected to his honor in Italy, Germany, and several other places ; of which I find the city of Avignon the first that was so happy as to express any devotion to him of this kind ; for in the chief church in that city there is a chapel dedicated to St. Joseph, in which there is a confraternity of bachelors, and a sodality of virgins, who assemble themselves upon his feast to hear Mass and vespers, which are sung there with great solemnity, to gain the indulgences granted by the Pope ; when each of these virgins has not only a loaf of holy bread presented her, as in other confraternities, but a posy of flowers, which all carry along with them in the procession.

This devotion seems to have had its rise from Pope Gregory XI. in

the fourteenth century ; for in a certain chapel in the church dedicated to St. Agricola, there is an altar-piece of St. Joseph accompanying and conducting the blessed Virgin and her infant Jesus into Egypt ; which church shows the liberality of this Pope, as well as his devotion to St. Joseph, whose coat of arms, in great escutcheons of stone, is placed around the chapel dedicated to him, so that it is more than probable he began the honors given to this saint in this ancient church of Avignon, where he held his holy chair or holy see at that time. He, moreover, at the same time, increased the revenues of the canons of the church of Agricola. This is the first place in which I find any marked honors and devotions to St. Joseph ; so that it is not much above three hundred years (now about four hundred and sixty), since we find any extraordinary devotion to this saint ; and if, before this time, there were any, it was very small, and far remote from the primitive ages ; God, by His divine Providence, thus ordering the conduct of devotion to great St. Joseph.

But why did God so long conceal the wonderful merits of this saint, without encouraging Christians, by a knowledge of them, to exhibit that love and devotion to him which is now everywhere practiced ? The chief reason that occurs to me is, because this devotion would have given too great an advantage and encouragement to the Ebionites, who attempted to rob Christ of His divinity, and maintained that Joseph was His natural father. This heresy not only sacrilegiously denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, but the virginity also of His blessed Mother.

Now, men, as we know, being easily carried to extremes, and to an excess in honoring those they esteem and love, reflecting upon the incomparable excellency of the spouse of the Virgin Mary, might easily have believed, and taken him for the father of Jesus, son to the blessed Virgin, especially meeting with some who were of that opinion ; but now we are removed from the danger of any such erroneous credulity, and as all those who are enemies of Christ's divinity and the virginity of our blessed Lady are silenced, there is no danger of extolling those merits which caused him to possess such eminent glory in heaven, and to deserve love and devotion upon earth, next to that of Jesus and Mary.

Moreover, though there had not been this danger of giving countenance to so great a heresy, yet this extraordinary devotion suits better with these latter ages, in which the world draws toward an end ; which, still decaying in piety and fervor, stands in need of some spiritual cordial, as I may say, to warm its tepidity, and to enkindle fervor in the hearts of the faithful ; for which end nothing could be more efficacious than love and devotion to this great patriarch and favorite of God. There are now 1894 years since the law of grace took its beginning by the happy conduct

of St. Joseph, who had the charge of the Word incarnate committed to him; and can it end more happily, and with greater glory, than under his intercession, procured by the affectionate acknowledgment, applause, and devotion of all nations to this their thrice-obliging benefactor and parent; and by their cordial and grateful acknowledgment to the father of our King, and to the spouse of the Queen of heaven and earth? Hereby, also, would God manifest to the world that in the beginning and in the end of the law of love, which are the two gates of God's Church, and of the law of grace, he would have Joseph, the most chaste and holy spouse of Mary, appear glorious and noble in this his enterprise, and faithful in his conduct, that thereby he might deserve the warm expression of our hearts, by our love and devotion to him. Wherefore, to him may be applied these words of the Proverbs, "Her husband is noble in the gates" (Prov. xxxi. 23); or as the Chaldaic translation has it, "Her husband is known in the gates," at the entrance and going out of the law of grace; that is, he is honored with the public mark of a senator, which was to be placed at the gates where such men only were wont to sit.

And although it would have been an incredible satisfaction to the faithful to have had him as much loved and honored during the whole time of grace as now, yet God would reserve this joy and contentment for these latter years; and the devout and learned Bellarmine called the age in which we live (when this was written, the seventeenth century) the age of saints, judging the number of persons that arrive to an eminent degree of sanctity, by making perfection the chief and whole study of their lives, to be far greater in these our days than in some former time. No time, therefore, could be better for honoring St. Joseph than the age of saints, wherein the splendor of his affections might appear so much the more glorious as it had been for so many ages under a cloud. O how wonderful is God in all His designs! and how good is He to us who live in this age, since He deprived former ages of the beauty of this sun, and ordained it should break through the cloud in our age, to give us this bright day, and to move us to a fervent love and devotion to St. Joseph!

Moreover, divine Providence has in this, one of the chief works of grace, acted after the manner He does in the rarest pieces of nature. It is His special favor that permits us to enjoy the sight of those beautiful objects which are the products of His creation; as diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and all other precious stones; which gives us also a sight of gold, silver, and other resplendent metals; yet there are far greater treasures of this kind buried in the bottom of the sea, and in the bowels of the earth, than we have ever yet seen or heard of. His bounty lets us also behold the many beautiful flowers, plants, trees, birds, and beasts, with that wonderful and agreeable variety of so many beautiful faces of men,

women, and children, the wonders of the universe: yet God hath kept a reserve of all these objects far more beautiful than any we have ever yet seen. He permits us, also, to behold the most glorious objects of the sun, moon, and stars, though their distance, in some measure, hinders us from perceiving their wonderful beauty. But there are far greater, richer and more beautiful objects than all these in the imperial heaven, which God has concealed from us, which are as far above the sun in beauty as the imperial heaven is in height. Although God's condescension toward us, in affording us the contemplation of all these beautiful objects, is a great mark of His goodness, yet He has been far more gracious in showing us the wonderful works of His grace than in discovering to us the aforesaid works of nature, by giving us some knowledge of those wonderful ornaments of the imperial heaven, especially of those two great luminaries, Jesus and Mary, who adorn and embellish His heavenly palace; with such a great number of saints also, who, like so many blazing stars, beautify His celestial Jerusalem, "or Vision of Peace;" and though our sight is too short and too weak to behold these great lights, whose number is beyond our calculation, and whose beauty and glory exceed our imagination, because we can have no complete knowledge of them until we be so happy as to enjoy their company by being placed with them in the celestial court; yet we must, nevertheless, receive this imperfect knowledge He gives us as a special favor: and also that He has, in so extraordinary a manner, been pleased to discover to us, in this our age, one of the richest treasures of heaven for greatness, sanctity and glory, which for so many ages He had concealed from the world, that we may enrich ourselves by rendering due honor and affection to him whom he had raised to the honor of being the foster-father of Jesus, and spouse of the Virgin Mary, and thereby gain those blessings which accompany such a devotion; and it is no less for St. Joseph's greater honor than our greater merit that God has reserved the discovery of his merits until our days.

We also know that, except the work of creation out of nothing, nothing is done here upon earth without due dispositions and preparations. The painter prepares his palette with colors, and primes his cloth, before he begins to paint; the builder squares and makes ready his timber, stone, and other materials, before he begins to build; the goldsmith refines his silver, and hammers out his plates, before he begins to emboss his work; ladies make up their ornaments and rich attire before they dress or adorn themselves; a rhetorician prepares and disposes his matter and figures to adorn his oration before he composes it; nay, we see that all sorts of artisans prepare tools and materials to work upon, before any excellent piece of work can be accomplished: and when it is done, it is necessary that the beholders should be duly informed and well disposed,

for the better understanding and admiring its perfections. God, therefore, would dispose the world to conceive and understand the great perfections of St. Joseph before He would discover to them such a masterpiece.

And not only art, but nature, produces her work by degrees, nor does she furnish them without many previous dispositions and trials; for Pliny, who searched more narrowly into her works than any other naturalist has ever done, says that "The bell-flower is an essay or trial of nature how to make a lily or tulip; and, after she has thus made it of one color, she takes still longer time (as the most experienced florists inform us), to adorn, trace, and paint it, after so artificial a manner, with so many kinds of rich resplendent colors, as render it so very beautiful, that the divine Wisdom gives it this commendation, saying that "Solomon, in all his glory, was not so richly attired as one of those." (Matt. vi. 29.) Yet nature does not communicate this beauty to them but by degrees, and after several trials of her skill; for she first raised it from seed only of one color, which is also very indifferent in respect of those colors wherewith she afterward stripes, traces, and adorns it.

If, then, from the works of art and nature, we have recourse to those of grace, immediately wrought by God Himself, we shall find that He takes the same measures wherewith He inspires art and nature to operate; especially in framing His chief masterpiece, His holy Church; for, to what end did He ordain so many ceremonies in the Jewish law? Why was He so careful of all the ornaments of Solomon's temple as to ordain that the very snuffers and other instruments of less moment should be of gold? It was because the beholding of these ceremonies served the people as an apprenticeship to learn the excellency and sublime practices of the new law of Jesus Christ, and these served as foundations whereupon that was to be built, and to dispose us to that perfection required and obtained by those sacraments instituted in the law of love, which the divine Wisdom was to establish in His Church. It was for this end, therefore, that He brought His people up in the exercise of such a multitude of ceremonies in the old law, that He might dispose them, by degrees, to the solid devotion and attention required in the new.

We also see that the written law, given by God to Moses, perfected the law of nature, and the law of grace perfects both the law of nature and the written law; and God made use of all these to bring us to that perfection which the virtue and prerogatives of His grace prepared us to obtain, the better to serve Him with such fervor and devotion as He required, when He should favor us with His own immediate presence.

Thus we see that God, by Himself and by His creatures, prepares, disposes, and perfects all His designs by degrees; and we see the reason

why God, for eighteen hundred years, has disposed and ordered that particular honors and devotions should be performed by His servants to particular saints, for particular benefits received by their intercession ; for He bestows upon each saint some particular grace or privilege, to move the faithful to a particular devotion to that particular saint ; giving to one saint the power of curing one disease, to another the power of curing a different distemper ; to one saint power to help us in one necessity, to another, to help us in a different exigency ; to one saint He gives the privilege to obtain one virtue for us, to another, power to obtain some other virtue. And why did God do all this, but to move His servants to a particular devotion to the saints in general ; and to dispose us also to a devotion to each saint in particular, when we want their help in such a necessity as God has given that saint a particular power to help us in ? And why has God reserved to this last age the declaration of the merits and power of St. Joseph, but that the devotion which He had inspired us to give to each saint in particular might serve, like so many dispositions and steps, to raise us to such a devotion to St. Joseph as he merits above all others, next to Jesus and Mary, he having all that power united in himself, which God had distributed among all other saints, to the end that all the particular devotions exhibited for so many ages to many different saints might be united and offered to him ; and that all might have recourse to him in their necessities, God has discovered to us that all the power He had before communicated and distributed to several saints is united and given to St. Joseph.

I should not thus freely have declared my thoughts upon so sublime a subject, had I not made my apology ; since, after all, none but God and His saints certainly know the true reason why St. Joseph received not more early honors in the Catholic Church. I shall now perform that which I also promised, which will be a far easier task, and that is, to make known to you who those particular clients of St. Joseph were whom God has inspired after a most particular manner to promote his honor.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE TEN PARTICULAR CLIENTS OF ST. JOSEPH, WHO, BY THEIR EXAMPLES,
MOVED US TO A PARTICULAR DEVOTION TO HIM.



THE clients of St. Joseph daily increase, and are already so numerous that there are few or none who desire not to be enrolled among them. All the clients of Jesus and Mary have also consecrated their affections to him, in acknowledgment of his amiability, and of the love which his reputed son, Jesus, and his spouse, Mary, have for him: their mouths and pens express the desires and wishes of their hearts, saying, "Praise be to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph." These are now becoming their aspirations, adding Joseph to the common aspiration of devout souls: and their frequent pronouncing of these words is a signal mark of the victory he has gained over their chaste affections. It has been heretofore a singular devotion of some persons, who were particularly devoted to the virtue of purity, to add Alexius to those two venerable names of Jesus and Mary; but since this lovely sun, St. Joseph, has pierced the cloud under which he so many years lay hidden, all change their note, and cry out, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph;" giving St. Joseph his own, yet without lessening their devotion to Alexius, whom, after St. Joseph, they honor with frequent aspirations, of "Live, Alexius! Oh, let Alexius live!" But the merits of St. Joseph, being of a different and higher rank, upon account of the alliance he had with the virtues of his holy spouse and with the mystery of the incarnation, which rendered him, as I have said, one of the created trinity, where he takes his place, give him a preference above all other saints; although after him every one may take Alexius, or what other saint they are devoted to, for the object of their particular affection.

The first and chief of those who were tenderly affected to St. Joseph was Jesus, the Son of God; for although our blessed Lady was the first in time who loved her spouse, since her love began before Jesus Christ was born, yet it is not to be doubted that the Saviour of the world loved and cherished him incomparably more than our Lady did; and therefore, although her love was precedent, as I said, in regard to time, yet the love which Jesus, as the Son of God, had for him before time, was above our imagination, and beyond the power of angels to express. He loved him as a father, and never did a son love a father as Jesus did Joseph; nay, join all the tender affections that all the children who have ever yet lived

have had for their fathers, yet the affection of Jesus to Joseph transcended them all. He had, in proportion, the same tenderness of affection for St. Joseph which he had for His Virgin Mother, and preferred none upon earth before St. Joseph, excepting herself; perfectly fulfilling the commandment of honoring his father and mother, with greater exactness and tenderness of affection than any child in the world ever did; and loved him also as it became such a child to love such a father, so amiable, so tender, so careful of Him, so singularly obliging to Him, as he was upon so many accounts.

Jesus loved him, also, for saving Him from the cruel hands of Herod, by fleeing with Him into Egypt, where he became, in some sort, the saviour of his Saviour; He loved him as his nursing-father, as fostered by his sweat and labors; He loved him, moreover, under the title of his angel guardian. Other persons have invisible angel guardians given them by God; Jesus alone had no angel guardian given Him; His divinity, being so strictly united to His humanity, was to him a sufficient guard; wherefore God gave Him St. Joseph as a visible guardian, which honor He conferred upon St. Joseph for the space of thirty years, bearing all that time the title and office of conductor, tutor, and governor of the Word incarnate. Moreover, the very name and right of a godfather, appointed by God Himself, was another motive of Jesus' extraordinary affection toward St. Joseph. In fine, such was His love, that, as the Eastern Church recounts out of some revelations, He loved him as the apple of His eye. The Saviour of the world, as Isidorus recounts out of very grave authors, entertaining his disciples upon the life of St. Joseph, spoke thus of him, "I conferred and conversed with St. Joseph as if I had been his son; he called me son, and I called him father; he commanded me and I obeyed him, and loved him as my father, and even as the apple of my eye."

If you still desire to see the effects of this extraordinary love, know that generally He favored him with all the particular marks of His love He ever gave to any saint. It was esteemed a signal favor to St. Mary Magdalen of the Ursins to have a sight of the infant Jesus, as He lay upon straw in the manger at Bethlehem. Blessed Teresa de Cerda, as a reward of her zeal in watching the corporals upon which His body was wont to lie upon the altar, while they were drying, lest any flies might light upon or stain them, saw our Saviour Himself lying upon them, and wrapping them about His sacred body. The honor St. Mary Magdalen received in kissing our Saviour's feet in the house of Simon, was also very great; but all these were nothing in comparison to what St. Joseph received.

He not only once, but all the time of Jesus' infancy, saw Him in the crib. How often he beheld Him in His swaddling clothes, and how many thousand times did he kiss His sacred feet?

It was a signal favor St. John received, to lay his head upon his Master's sacred breast ; and what knowledge of secrets and mysteries did he not draw from thence ? But how many times has Jesus rested His sacred head upon St. Joseph's breast, while he carried Him in his arms, tenderly embracing and cherishing Him at home and abroad ; in his journey to Egypt and elsewhere ? And how many secrets did He not then communicate to him ?

It was esteemed a particular favor to blessed Ursula of Valence, when our Saviour appeared to her, clothed in episcopal robes, and giving her His blessing ; and, at another time, when He entered by night into her chamber, while she was at her prayers, more bright and glorious than the sun, transporting and filling her heart with divine comforts. Great was the happiness our Saviour afforded His apostles by three years' continual conversation with them, seeing His admirable example, and hearing His divine wisdom ; but St. Joseph surpassed all these : conversing with Him not only for three, but for thirty years together ; seeing and hearing His divine word ; beholding Him, not in an episcopal but miraculous habit, that grew as His body did, and this not as He was passing from one place to another, but constantly in his own house ; not receiving one, but innumerable benedictions from His divine hand.

We read, also, of an extraordinary favor that our Saviour did blessed Jane of France, when He sat at table with her, at no other banquet than that of three hearts, served up upon a plate of gold, which were His own, His Mother's and hers. The apostles also enjoyed the honor of eating with Him at the tables of Lazarus, Simon, Zaccheus, Matthew, and several others ; but was it not a far greater favor that St. Joseph enjoyed, of being His and His Mother's constant guest, sitting at table with them, having his soul fed and set on fire with the inflamed words that proceeded from the heart and mouth of the Son of God, and from the heart of His blessed Mother, where she had laid and hoarded up all those mysteries which she had heard and seen ?

We admire the visions He bestowed upon His apostles and other saints at His transfiguration upon Mount Thabor, and by several apparitions after His resurrection and ascension into heaven ; also to St. Paul, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Teresa, St. Francis, St. Dominic, St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Ignatius, and to many other saints ; replenished with such a resplendent beauty, accompanied with such a melodious attendance of angels, as all the annals of saints recount. And was not St. Joseph also surrounded by all the choirs of angels, singing "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*" ? St. Bridget, in her revelations, relates that St. Joseph saw our Saviour environed by a divine light, which, according to His Mother's testimony, far exceeded the lustre and brightness of the sun, saying to St. Bridget,

“ St. Joseph often beheld an admirable glory, in the midst of which my Son appeared in great splendor ; and, at the same time, heavenly music delighted our hearts, the angels declaring and singing the glories of my Son.” Lastly, we look with reason upon it as the highest point of the love of Jesus Christ, when He visibly appears to His favorites at the hour of death ; visiting, comforting and assisting them in that last passage out of the miseries of this world into everlasting happiness ; for in this St. Joseph had a most particular mark of His favor above all others, whose heart was filled with most delicious dying thoughts. The Eastern Church, above cited, assures us that our Saviour assisted him in his last agony, leaning on his pillow, taking him by the hand, receiving his last breath ; and, at his last groan, closing his eyes, shutting his mouth, and forming his visage with His own most divine hand, to give him a graceful aspect at his last farewell. Are not all these extraordinary marks of the particular love of Jesus to St. Joseph ?

The second we find enrolled among the lovers of St. Joseph, is Mary, the Mother of Jesus ; she loved him in quality of her spouse. Never did any lady so faithfully, so chastely love her husband, or so religiously engage in conversation, as Mary did with Joseph. He was most beloved and esteemed by her as the protector of her consecrated virginity, and also as the conserver of her honor, whose conversation was a security to her unblemished reputation against any reproach that could be made concerning her virgin child-birth ; for, had he forsaken her during the nine months after her conception, her purity would unavoidably have been suspected. Moreover, she bore an affectionate service to him, as to her husband and head, and as to one of the greatest merit among mankind, next to her Son Jesus.

This love of the Virgin Mary to her spouse caused her to descend to the lowest services whereby she could in any way express her esteem of him : it caused her to attend him, to prepare his meals, and to perform all other humble offices he stood in need of. She knew very well the place she possessed upon earth, and that, also, which was designed for her in heaven, as being the Mother of God, as being Queen of men and angels, and that in this regard St. Joseph was her inferior ; yet the love she had for him made her lay aside those considerations and render him all sorts of honor and respect : for, as St. Bridget says in her revelations, “ She called him her lord, never spoke to him but with a wonderful and most submissive respect, and there was no tenderness of affection that a loving soul can express to one she esteems and loves which she did not a thousand times testify to St. Joseph ; wherefore, to convince you how she loved him, hearken to the affectionate character she herself gives him to St. Bridget, as it is thus set down in her revelations: .

“My spouse was reserved in speech, never uttering the least unprofitable, murmuring, or complaining word; never moved to anger, or showing the least impatience. He was contented in poverty, diligent and vigilant in labor; most obedient and condescending to all my inclinations, and very meek and affable, even to those who most rudely treated him. He courageously defended the absent that suffered detraction, and was a faithful witness and divulger of God’s wonderful works. He was resigned to live upon earth, although his longing and earnest desire was after heaven, expecting and confiding in God’s promises, and frequently repeating, ‘God grant I may see them accomplished.’ He avoided public assemblies; took no pleasure in creatures; but all his thoughts and desires were that he might perfectly accomplish God’s divine will.”

St. Teresa of Jesus deserves the third place among those who, after a particular manner, have expressed their love and esteem to St. Joseph. She merits the title of St. Joseph’s chief devotee, and may well, therefore, be placed among his admirers. She made choice of him for her particular advocate, frequently recommending herself to him as to one she honored above all other saints. She styled him her father and master, and had an admirable confidence in him, and thereby deserved a reward from him, as she herself attests in the sixth chapter of her life—which was, that she never asked anything of him, for body or soul, that he denied her; which caused her to say, that God, by His other saints, helped us in some particular cases of necessity, but helps us in all necessities by St. Joseph, as by His plenipotentiary, to let us understand that as He was subject to him in all things upon earth as to a father, so He was the same in heaven, granting him whatsoever he asked. This was St. Teresa’s opinion concerning her great patron, to whom she was so devoted that she endeavored to invite all to take him for their particular patron and protector, but especially those who desire to give themselves to prayer; and, therefore, was wont to say, “Let him who cannot find a master to teach him the art of praying take this great saint for one, and he shall not fail to prove a most skillful scholar.” In fine, she did what she could to instill into all persons a particular devotion to St. Joseph, and, therefore, endeavored to engage their hearts, with her own, in an ardent love of devotion to him; which desire of hers, together with the experiments she had had of the good obtained by the merits and prayers of this saint, caused her to promise the same success to all who should recommend themselves to him; attesting that she never knew any person who had a true devotion to him, or rendered him any particular service, but obtained an advancement in virtue.

You see here the cause of my ranking her as the first who set up the standard of devotion to St. Joseph by divulging his merits, and by a due

acknowledgment of his favors, whereby, in these our times, she brought in that profitable devotion to this great saint.

The fourth person noted for his particular devotion to St. Joseph is that holy Minim, blessed Gaspar Bond, who, after Jesus and Mary, had none so near his heart as St. Joseph. All his life he had a most singular devotion to him, and at his death his chief recourse was to this holy and amiable patriarch, and he expressed his devotion by a particular honor shown to his name, after Jesus and Mary, which made such an impression on him that he could think or speak of nothing else. He took a particular wish to pronounce them, and thought that doing so prospered all his undertakings; and this was the short but pithy encomium he gave them:

Hæc tria nomina,
Bona sunt omnia,
Et mundi lumina,
Et cœli limina.

This trinity of names
This lower world inflames,
Contains the goods of love,
And opes heaven's gates above.

Wherefore, to show the love and esteem he had for them, he used them as a watchword, as a salutation at meeting or parting; as a sign of admiration, as a parenthesis, as a transition, and upon all occasions.

When he came home, his salutation to the porter was, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph! pray, brother, open the gate;" and the same salutation he used when he went forth; and when any strangers came in, his salutation was, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph; father, you are welcome." Thus, on all occasions, these names were in his mouth, and as he lived in this devotion, so he desired to die in the same; wherefore, during his last sickness, he earnestly recommended to those who assisted him that when they saw him in his last agony, they would frequently repeat these names in his ears, which were an extract and abridgment of his affections, and a singular cordial to help and conduct his soul in its passage to God: and that happened which he desired, for he died with these words in his mouth, "Good Jesus, have mercy upon me;" and then, invoking these three names, "Jesus, Mary, Joseph," he yielded up his happy soul. God grant us all so happy an end!

The fifth person, devoted, after a particular manner, to St. Joseph, was the prince and prelate of Geneva, St. Francis of Sales, who, we have reason to believe, honored him above all the saints in heaven after the blessed Virgin Mary, according to Father Peter Bernard of the Society of Jesus, who assisted him in his last sickness, and who was acquainted with two

or three very remarkable passages that testified the very great devotion this holy prelate had to St. Joseph. The night before he died, being at Lyons, upon the point of his departure, an apoplexy seized him, although not perceptible to the rector of St. Joseph's College, of the Society of Jesus, when he came to salute and bid him adieu, who offered him his and all the fathers' services that were in his house; to which all the reply the bishop returned was, to tell him, with an angelic sweetness, "O father, know you not that I am all St. Joseph's?" The same father also relates, that watching the following night in the chamber of this holy prelate, to assist him at his happy death, while the apoplexy grew worse, not having his own breviary to say his hours, one lent him the breviary of the sick prelate, in which he found but one picture, which was of St. Joseph. Another mark of his tender devotion to St. Joseph is also related by the same father, which happened some time before, when he wrote the first sermon in our Church upon the feast of St. Joseph. It seems the cardinal of Markmont, archbishop of Lyons, had engaged the bishop to preach on St. Joseph's day in the church of the Carmelites, while Father Bernard, being ignorant of this, invited him also to preach in the Jesuits' church, dedicated to St. Joseph. He refused not to do him this favor, giving him this answer: "Although, when I bring forth twins by one day's labor, I shall not come off well, yet, for the love of St. Joseph, I will do it." However, he performed it in the afternoon with very great success, and for an hour and a half so employed his eloquence in expressing his feeling devotion to St. Joseph, explaining the eminent merits, and setting forth the praises of his beloved patron after such a manner as convinced the cardinal and the rest of his auditory, of the ardent affection he had for this saint.

This devout sermon of his puts me in mind of a rich treatise he wrote concerning this divine spouse of our blessed Lady, which is in his book of *Spiritual Entertainments*, wherein he evidences how great an esteem he had for St. Joseph; and that you may, by a part, judge of the whole piece, and of the great affection and esteem he had for this saint, give me leave to cite one of his exclamations: "Oh, what a great saint," says he, "is the glorious St. Joseph! He is not only a patriarch, but the chief of all patriarchs. He is not only a confessor, but more than a confessor; for in his prerogative of confessor are included the dignity of bishops, the generosity of martyrs, the purity of virgins, and the perfections of all other saints. It is with just reason, therefore, that he is compared to the palm, which is the king of trees." This declares his zeal for the honor of this saint, and the love he had for him. Moreover, if we address ourselves to the religious of the Visitation of our Blessed Lady—his spiritual children, being of the order he instituted, and who inherit the love their

founder had for St. Joseph—they will tell you their patriarch has dedicated his book, *Of the Love of God*, to St. Joseph; that he has put the first monastery and church of their order under his protection; and that he everywhere bears the title of their patron or protector; that he has ordered, in all their houses, to keep his feast with solemnity; and in his institute has commanded that all his religious children should bear a particular devotion to him; that the mistress of novices should cause them and the postulants to get into the habit of calling upon him when they began their mental prayer, and take him for their guide and advocate in that exercise. These are his daughters, who imitate their father in their love and devotion to St. Joseph, which he has, as his divine legacy, entailed upon them.

The sixth who was eminent for her devotion to St. Joseph was blessed Margaret de Chateau, of the holy order of St. Dominic. As, commonly, we think upon what we love, so this virgin had ordinarily no other subject of meditation than the sacred birth of our Saviour, lying in the manger, assisted by the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; and meditating upon those services that St. Joseph had rendered to this infant and His holy Mother caused both an incredible consolation in her mind, and a singular affection to this holy patriarch. Nor was this without many wonderful effects, which were manifestly wrought by the finger of God, who most wonderfully drew in her heart these three personages, attending upon Jesus lying in the crib—a favor never before heard of; she being often heard to say to her confidants, “Oh, that you but knew what I carry and keep in my heart!” After she was dead she was opened, and in her heart they found three precious stones, on which were engraved the three objects of her love. On the first was an image of our blessed Lady, with a rich crown upon her head; on the second lay little Jesus, surrounded by a flock of lambs; in the third stood St. Joseph, with a venerable countenance, a mantle of gold hanging upon his shoulders, a dove over his head, and a religious woman kneeling at his feet, resembling the deceased nun. The sight of this, as we may truly believe, was a comfort to all the beholders; and the fame of it was spread far and near, which much increased the devotion to Jesus, Mary and Joseph. These three miraculous pieces are preserved to this day, and are to be seen in the town of Chateau, in the monastery of the order of St. Dominic, where they are kept with great devotion.

The seventh person famous for her particular devotion to St. Joseph is blessed Agatha of the holy Cross, of the same order; and it was upon the feast of the Purification that this pious soul conceived so great a devotion to this saint. The occasion whereof was this. She had a design to act the part of a severe governess, in correcting certain women, whom

she had a little before taken in a fault, thereby to frighten them from falling again into the like ; which afterward she had a scruple of, fearing she might have exceeded in her words and manner of correction, wherefore she resolved to go to confession ; and while she was in the church preparing herself for it, our blessed Lady appeared to her, with the infant Jesus in her arms, accompanied by St. Joseph. The surprise of so great a favor made her not lose so good an occasion of begging pardon for her fault, both of the infant and His Mother, which they granted her, and at the same time filled her heart with so great an abundance of joy and comfort, that she spent the whole day in thanksgiving to them, considering, at the same time, the seraphic affections St. Joseph had, when he assisted in the temple of Jerusalem at the purification of our blessed Lady.

Nor did she permit this devotion they had enkindled in her heart toward themselves and St. Joseph to cool, but still increased the fervor thereof toward the spouse of the blessed Virgin, which was encouraged and increased by a vision she had, upon the feast of this holy patriarch, concerning his life and death ; wherein she understood, by divine inspiration, that when he was at his last gasp, he felt an extreme regret to quit the company and conversation of Jesus and his beloved spouse ; knowing that, after the departure of his soul from his body, he was not presently to enjoy God, but was to expect this happiness after the ascension of the Son of God : which grief continuing, our blessed Saviour bade him not afflict himself at this separation, for he should quickly see Him and His eternal Father, with an accomplishment of the chiefest and greatest promises God had made by the prophets. These words comforted him, but the prayers that Jesus made for him in his last agony comforted him far more ; and so he passed from this to the next, in the arms of his son and Saviour, and in the presence of the most sacred Virgin, his spouse. The consideration of these particular privileges with reason rendered the holy virgin Agatha more devoted than ever to St. Joseph.

The devout Yolant de Silva deserves to have the eighth place or rank among the devotees of St. Joseph. Her chief devotion was to consider the infancy of our blessed Saviour, who was dressed in swaddling bands for the love of man. Meditating upon this point enkindled her devotion toward St. Joseph—she imagining his ears blessed with the cries of this blessed babe ; his eyes, with beholding Him in all conditions ; his arms, by being as a cradle to rock, carry, and embrace Him ; his mouth, by declaring the faith and affection of his heart, by his words, and those amorous impressions of his lips upon the infant's sacred feet. This mystery occasioned her devotions also to the holy innocents, who, as the Church says, "Not by speaking, but by dying, professed their faith." In honor of them she yearly said, one hundred and forty-four thousand times, our

Lord's prayer—they being so many in number, as some reasonably suppose, grounding their opinion upon what St. John relates in the Apocalypse—"They having His name written on their foreheads" (Apoc. xiv. 1), for whom they sacrificed their lives. These devotions proved very advantageous to her; for St. Joseph and the holy innocents, in requital, visited her at the hour of her death, never quitting her until they conducted her devout soul to heaven.

The ninth client of St. Joseph was the devout John Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris—no lover ever having the like affection for his beloved object as he had for St. Joseph. He, having composed a book, entitled it *His Josephine*, in honor of St. Joseph. In each of his sermons he never omitted to say something in his praise; and in having, as I may say, gathered all that can be said to increase St. Joseph's praise and esteem, this work may very well be called a magazine of St. Joseph's praises. But the better to judge of his love to St. Joseph, it is necessary to read what he says of him; as, that he was sanctified in his mother's womb, as St. John the Baptist was; that he had obtained a perfect victory over sensuality, which was always subject to his reason: that he was confirmed in grace; that he arose with our Saviour from the dead; that he then appeared to his beloved spouse, the blessed Virgin; that no saint in heaven is greater than he, except the blessed Virgin. So that to hear what he says, you would believe God had chosen him for St. Joseph's chief panegyrist, to write and set forth his praises, and that all others who have written on this subject were but his scholars. It was he that found out the true elevation of the star, and that its ascendant was next to the Virgin Mother, which proves him a true lover and client of St. Joseph.

The devout Henry Chicot, canon of Chartres, deserves the tenth place among the clients of St. Joseph, all his thoughts being how to augment his honor, either by himself or others. He undertook to write a book upon his marriage with the Mother of God, in which he endeavored to set forth his praises; but, not being able to finish it, in order that St. Joseph might lose nothing by his death, he addressed himself by letter to his friend, John Gerson, obliging him, by all the ties of friendship between them, either to perfect this work he had begun, or to make one of his own upon the same subject; which he performed, both to satisfy his friend's piety and his own devotion to St. Joseph. The canon, also, that he might the better evidence his signal devotion to St. Joseph, in his last will and testament left a considerable sum of money, as a foundation for a yearly distribution to the canons, to oblige them daily to sing his hymn and pray in his honor—thereby habituating them to the devotion of honoring and recommending themselves to this saint.

Behold, here, the ten lovers of St. Joseph, given us for an example how to honor his merit, and how to put ourselves under the shelter of his powerful protection, with assurance of the considerable advantages we shall gain thereby. But he has had, besides these, very many other clients of both sexes, the number of whom would make too long a list for so short a treatise; yet I cannot omit naming a few more of them: as, first, blessed Joseph Hermon, of the order of St. Norbert, who, for his devotion to St. Joseph, deserved to have the name of Joseph given him by the blessed Virgin; who, as Surius relates in his life, deserved also doing him so great an honor as to take him for her spouse, because he honored her dearest spouse, St. Joseph; and, as a token of endearment, put her little infant Jesus into his arms, that he might carry Him therein, as St. Joseph had done. Father Peter Cotton also, of the Society of Jesus, so well known over France for his rare virtues, was also particularly devoted to St. Joseph, which moved him to secure that the first church in France which was honored with his glorious name should be dedicated to him at Lyons, near Bell-court. He had so tender an affection for him as thereby to move St. Joseph to reveal to him the day of his death, and to procure it upon his own feast. St. Bridget and St. Gertrude were commanded to be his devotees; and those happy Carmelites, Ann of Bartholomew, and Ann of Jesus (who in this imitated their foundress, St. Teresa), were his constant and fervent clients. I ought here, also, to recount those writers, who, with so much zeal, have set forth his perfections: as St. Bernard, St. Bernardine of Sienna, St. Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzen, St. Peter Chrysologus, St. Thomas of Aquin, the late James of Arana, Charles Stangel, Peter Moreles, Stephen Bennet, Charles of St. Paul, and many others who have set forth his praises. Nor ought we to forget those many devout souls of our own acquaintance who have had a very great tenderness toward him, whereof some are still living in the world (when this work was written) and out of it in religion; and others gone to heaven to reap the fruit of their devotion.

But if these examples have not force or power enough to effect what I desire, I shall endeavor to propose, in the following chapters, such easy devotions to this saint as will of themselves excite us to practice them.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE DAILY DEVOTIONS THAT MAY BE EXERCISED TOWARD ST. JOSEPH.



ACTIONS are the proper language and best expression of love, as they testify, by effects, the truth of our good wishes, and are protestations to the person we love. What does the frequent repetition of "I love you, I honor you, great St. Joseph, and esteem you above all saints, after the ever-blessed Virgin Mary," mean, if this love and honor stop here, and make no further progress than our lips?

All I intend is to make our love to this saint no less effective and affective; not that I require every point I set down to be put in practice, but I propose several, that the pious reader may make choice of that which most pleases him; and all of them are so easy and profitable that none but a soul that is hardened against, or disgusted with, what conduces to her eternal happiness can be displeased with any of them.

The first devotion is, to have an image or picture in our chamber, book, or oratory; and this is what his devout client, St. Teresa, practised, who, as her life informs us, set up over the gates of all the monasteries she founded the statues of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and wherever she went carried with her a picture of St. Joseph, which is still kept at Avila, naming and styling him the founder of her order. And what occasioned this devotion was a conference our Saviour once had with her, after she had communicated; for, being crossed in the foundation of the Monastery of St. Joseph at Avila, Christ bade her use all her endeavors to build this monastery, promising it should be His own work, and that it would be very agreeable to His divine Majesty, would redound much to His honor, and that He should faithfully be served therein, and commanded it to be called the Monastery of St. Joseph; to set up St. Joseph's and the blessed Virgin's statues at the gate, promising that He would be guardian thereof. St. Teresa, understanding His will, put all His commands into execution, ordering the images to be placed as He had ordained. Perhaps you will tell me you have neither house to build nor any foundation to make. Pardon me if I tell you you lie under a great mistake, since you have a building of perfection to raise, the foundation of a virtuous life to lay; you are also to employ your thoughts about a habitation that you must live in for eternity. One of the means to compass this great work of our salvation is a tender devotion to St. Joseph.

What devotion, therefore, can be easier than this—to keep the spiritual image of St. Joseph in our thoughts, to procure it, by carrying it in our books, by keeping it in our closet, by letting it put us in mind to call upon Him whom the image represents, and beg His assistance in all our necessities? By the help of such an image, a gentleman of Venice was drawn from a most miserable to a most happy state of his soul, which had otherwise been lost. The story I shall hereafter relate in the eleventh chapter, with several others, which prove the care St. Joseph takes of the spiritual malady of those who are devoted to him.

The second devotion I propose is a particular affection to some mystery of his holy life ; such as that of his marriage with the blessed Virgin ; his flight into Egypt with our Saviour, and the blessed Virgin, his spouse ; or any other like these. Blessed Agatha of the holy Cross was wont to fix her thoughts upon his happy death, in the arms of our most merciful Redeemer ; and if I knew to which of these my pious reader's inclination would most lead him, I would promote his devotion thereto : but, instead of this, to show how pleasing such devotions as these are to Almighty God, I will here relate what happened to a devout client of St. Joseph, a religious man of the Monastery of Montferat, in Spain, who was particularly devoted to his journey into Egypt with Jesus and His holy Virgin Mother.

It fell out that this religious man, returning once very late to his monastery, lost his way, and wandered so long up and down a mountain some distance from it that at length he gave himself up for lost, by reason of the contagious effects that were occasioned by the unwholesome fogs of that place, or because he feared to become a prey to the merciless beasts of which the place was very full. His fears and apprehensions increased with the darkness of the night, and caused him to recommend himself to St. Joseph, when, upon a sudden, he meets a grave man leading an ass, which had a woman upon it, bearing an infant in her arms. This happy meeting gave him wonderful comfort, which was increased when, asking the way to the monastery, the man who led the ass bade him follow him, and he would lead him the right way. As they went, their discourse was of God, and with so much fruit that never did the religious man, even in prayer, feel the like sweetness, which was accompanied with no less joy when he saw himself enter the village in which the monastery was ; which joy was followed by no less astonishment when, on a sudden, his guide disappeared, as soon as he had thus brought him out of all danger ; which gave him presently the assurance that it was St. Joseph who had brought him out of this trouble and danger he was in, whereby his devotions to this great saint were increased, and also to that particular part of his life to which he was before so much devoted.

The third devotion is, to say every-day, or at least once a week, his little office for the greater convenience of those who desire to make use thereof. This office contains a continual praise of St. Joseph, in which some of his devotees who say it daily, others who say it every Saturday, find great comfort, and no less profit also; and the great advantage that the clients of St. Joseph experience is his readiness always to acknowledge them as such, and to assist them accordingly, as appears by what some years since happened at Loudun in France.

The prioress of the Ursulines of Loudun, named in religion Sister Jane of the Angels, of the house of Cose, was possessed by an evil spirit called Leviathan, who exercised extraordinary violences and cruelties toward her. She, not knowing how better to defend herself against his tyranny, made a vow to say every day the office of St. Joseph for a whole year, and weekly to do some penance in his honor, to obtain, by his powerful intercession, a freedom from the persecution she suffered from this her infernal enemy. Two or three days after she had made this vow, the wicked spirit left her at the first exorcism, leaving a cross on the forehead of the said religious, as the exorcist had enjoined him; and at the same time another devil cried out, "St. Joseph is come, and has caused Leviathan to depart."

The fourth devotion is, daily to recite the Litany of St. Joseph, which contains all the chief passages of his life, together with all the extraordinary privileges God bestowed upon him; and having lately seen a manuscript of a certain religious of the order of St. Bennet, in which were set down, among some particular devotions to St. Joseph, a little litany composed in his honor in an alphabetical order, which pleased me much, in facilitating the memory in relating it, I therefore take occasion of giving it in English in the same order; which, if you like not, you may make use of the great litany, which you will find in the Office of St. Joseph, with the Prayer, in their proper place.

THE ALPHABETICAL LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Jesus, receive our prayers.

Lord Jesus, grant our petitions.

O God the Father, Creator of the world, have mercy upon us.

O God the Son, Redeemer of mankind, have mercy upon us.

O God the Holy Ghost, perfecter of the elect, have mercy upon us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.



Holy Family.

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

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Holy Mary, spouse of St. Joseph,
 Holy Joseph, advocate of the humble,
 Holy Joseph, blessed among men,
 Holy Joseph, confirmed in grace,
 Holy Joseph, defender of the meek,
 Holy Joseph, exiled with Christ into Egypt,
 Holy Joseph, favorite of the King of heaven,
 Holy Joseph, guardian of the Word incarnate,
 Holy Joseph, honored among men,
 Holy Joseph, idea of humility and obedience,
 Holy Joseph, kind intercessor of the afflicted,
 Holy Joseph, lily of chastity and temperance,
 Holy Joseph, mirror of silence and resignation,
 Holy Joseph, nursing-father to the Son of God,
 Holy Joseph, obsequious servant to the Son of the Virgin Mary,
 Holy Joseph, patron of the industrious and innocent,
 Holy Joseph, quintessence of all virtue,
 Holy Joseph, ruler of the family of Jesus,
 Holy Joseph, spouse of the ever blessed Virgin,
 Holy Joseph, theatre of all glorious privileges,
 Holy Joseph, union of all Christian perfections,
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, hear us, O Lord.
 O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us
 Pray for us, O holy Joseph.
 That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Pray for us.

The Prayer.

Assist us, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the merits of the spouse of thy most holy Mother, that what our unworthiness cannot obtain, may be given us by his intercession: Who livest and reignest with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

The better to excite you to a practice of this devotion, and of reciting the litany of this great saint, I shall here set down some particular favors obtained by the recital of them, either every day, or only for a certain time.

The religious of the order of St. Ursula had a design of settling themselves at Lambesa, in Provence, upon hopes given them of effecting it, by some inhabitants of that place; wherefore they removed thither, but found so little satisfaction at their first arrival, meeting with so many difficulties, that they could not so much as find a house to live in. They resolved to return to Aix; but first had recourse to St. Joseph, whom they had taken

for their protector in their design, and resolved for nine days together to say his litany after Mass ; but what appeared as a wonderful effect of their devotion, before the end of the nine days a priest of great worth and authority, who had built a house and a church adjoining it, in honor of St. Teresa, near the town, came to find out the superior, to make her an offer of the church and house, and to put her in possession of all things else belonging thereto : which offer they accepted, and presently the religious took possession of it, and were settled there by the especial favor of St. Joseph, who not only took them into his particular charge, but placed them under the protection of his great and dear child, St. Teresa, in a house and church where she was greatly honored, and where she desired her great patron, St. Joseph, should be honored also.

Fifth, say at least the prayer at the end of the litany, every day, or very often ; this being a short but a substantial and pleasing devotion to him whose qualities cannot but invite us to make use of it, and thereby to imitate the canons of Chartres, who daily recite it, as well to satisfy their own devotion as to comply with the pious desires of the devout Henry Chicot, their benefactor and the founder of this devotion.

I cannot here omit what will authorize this devotion, by relating how great an advantage it procured a religious house of nuns, as I heard from the mouth of their superior a few months ago (when this was written). This monastery had not received any novices for a long time, which much afflicted the religious ; wherefore, the superior thought it necessary to have recourse to St. Joseph to beg his assistance : and therefore they resolved for six months together daily to recite his prayer after Mass for this intention, which all the religious cheerfully performed. The devotion was no sooner begun, than a young lady with a good fortune offered herself to live and die with them in God's service ; which favor will never be forgotten by that community, and has obliged them to a constant confidence in St. Joseph as a father, particularly this his child, for having procured such a favor to them and her, by his powerful intercession.

Sixth, you may assign one day in the week for the exercise of some particular devotion in honor of St. Joseph. Saturday seems to me the most proper day, upon which he may be jointly honored with his most amiable spouse. It is now a devotion practiced by some pious souls, to dedicate each day in the week to some particular devotion : as, Sunday, to the honor of the blessed Trinity and the angel guardian ; Monday, to the honor of God the Father, and for the souls in purgatory ; Tuesday, to God the Son and St. Ann ; Wednesday, to God the Holy Ghost, and the patron whose name we bear ; Thursday, to the honor of the blessed sacrament, and St. Barbara, who rewards her clients with entreating of God that they may receive their viaticum, or communion, before death ;

Friday, to the honor of the passion of our Saviour, and to St. Francis of Assisium; and Saturday, to the honor of the Mother of God, and St. Joseph, her spouse. It is not convenient I should here suggest what each one should do that day, but leave it to the devotion with which each one shall feel himself inspired; for example, some good work—as the giving of alms, the doing some penance, or performing any of the devotions beforementioned, or whatever else the Holy Ghost shall inspire you with. Let it be performed this day in honor of the person to whom you design your devotion.

The seventh devotion may be to call to mind the memory of the seven dolors or griefs that afflicted St. Joseph; or of the seven joys that were a great comfort to him throughout his whole life. This was a devotion that St. Joseph himself taught to two religious men of the holy order of St. Francis, after he had delivered them from the danger of death; who, being cast away at sea, happily laid hold of a plank, upon which they were tossed to and fro upon the waves for three days and nights. In their danger and affliction their whole recourse was to St. Joseph, begging his assistance in their sad condition: who appeared in the habit of a young man of beautiful features, and encouraged them to confide in his assistance, and, as their pilot, conducted them into a safe harbor. They, desirous to know who their benefactor was, asked his name, that they might gratefully acknowledge so great a blessing and favor. He told them he was St. Joseph, and advised them daily to recite "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" seven times, in memory of his seven dolors or griefs, and of his seven joys. Having said this he disappeared.

The Seven Dolors of St. Joseph.

1. The grief which filled the mind of St. Joseph at the idea of forsaking his Virgin spouse, when she had conceived by the Holy Ghost.

2. St. Joseph's beholding the child Jesus shivering with cold in the manger, and so miserably accommodated.

3. St. Joseph's beholding Christ shedding His sacred blood, in the ceremony of circumcision.

4. The words of Simeon on the day of purification, "That a sword shall pierce the blessed Virgin's heart."

5. Christ's flight into Egypt, occasioned by the persecution of Herod.

6. The fear St. Joseph had on his return from Egypt, hearing that Archelaus reigned.

7. St. Joseph's seeking the infant Jesus, when returning from Jerusalem.

The Seven Joys of St. Joseph.

1. The consoling message of the angel, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear; take Mary for thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

2. His hearing the angelic salutation; the adoration of the shepherds, and beholding the three kings prostrate before the infant God.

3. His pronouncing the most sacred and saving name of Jesus, as the eternal Father had ordained by the angel.

4. What Simeon said, that "Christ should be a light to the Gentiles, the glory of Israel, and the resurrection of many."

5. The falling down of the Egyptian idols at the approach of the Son of God.

6. Commanded by an angel from heaven to return home with Jesus and His Virgin Mother.

7. His finding Jesus in the temple, sitting among the doctors, who were astonished at His wisdom.

These good religious men daily meditated upon these piercing dolors and comfortable joys of their charitable deliverer; and, performing his commands, continued his devout clients all their lives, hereby honoring so powerful a protector; whom he told, moreover, as may be seen in Peter Moreles, that he would afford the like assistance to all who shall practise this devotion in all their necessities, but most particularly at the hour of their death. Wherefore, it will be our own fault if we enjoy not the same happiness of obtaining his favor, by rendering him the like services; he esteeming nothing more than the good will of his clients, expressed after this manner.

Eighth, to lead a life full of that constant interior and exterior resignation, in thought, word, and deed, to the will of God, as St. Joseph did; in which he took so great a pleasure that his ordinary aspiration was, "Oh, that I may but live to see the will of God entirely fulfilled!" This was his ordinary aspiration and only desire, as the Mother of God revealed to St. Bridget; adding, that this was the cause why he was so great and glorious in heaven. There is nothing, therefore, so easy as to imitate him in this point, by often saying every day, "God's will be done; I desire to live only to fulfill the will of God." We should at least accustom ourselves, as soon as we awake, constantly to begin the day with this act of conformity, in resigning ourselves punctually to the will of God; it being the most sublime of all acts of virtue, and the crown of all perfection.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT DEVOTIONS ARE TO BE SAID TO ST. JOSEPH UPON HIS FEAST.

HERE is no place throughout the world, where the feast of St. Joseph is kept with greater solemnity than in Canada, a country in the northwestern part of America; he being the father, patron and protector of New France. For this reason his feast is solemnly kept there; and that we may see how it is kept, I will here set down what I took out of a relation, printed in the year 1637. The manner in which they celebrate it is as follows: Upon the vigil of his feast the standard of Quebec is set up upon one of the chief bastions; and at the discharge of a cannon or warning-piece, the governor of the place causes artificial fireworks to be lighted.

On the one side there is raised a pillar, upon which there appears the name of St. Joseph in fire, in very large characters; over which, from a crown of stars made in fireworks, are cast out a great number of serpents, that fly into the air; and behind it are placed a great many rockets, which also fly to a great height, and there break into many stars, which fall upon them.

Near this pillar is raised a fair castle, richly painted, and set out with a great variety of colors, flanked with four towers, beset with so many lights and fireworks as enlighten the battery, which is surrounded with a great many flaming spears; and a great number of flags, bespangled with fire, appear from the tops of the towers, from which there continually ascend a great many serpents made in fireworks, six and six at a time, at an equal distance from each other; and also many dozens of great rockets, twelve at a time, resting some while between each dozen. At the close of the evening, the governor of Quebec, accompanied with all his officers, in sight of a great number of savages who live round the country, come to see the solemnity, sets fire to these machines; the wonderful sight whereof gives great occasion to the savages to honor and esteem St. Joseph, for whom they perceive the Christians have so great a veneration. Upon the day of his feast, they also express very great devotion in all their churches, where all things are performed with great solemnity; giving thanks to God for having done them the honor to bestow St. Joseph upon them for their protector, whom He had made guardian to His Son Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate.

From the consideration of this solemnity and devotion to St. Joseph in Canada, let us consider what we may also practise upon the same feast ; that as they do what they can to observe it with due solemnity, so we may do the like ; not so much by exterior marks of joy, which are very laudable, as by exercising interior devotion and fervor in all our actions ; to increase thereby the glory of this saint, and move him to advance us in perfection, for the secure obtaining our salvation. For, if there be a feast in the whole year, next to those of our Saviour and blessed Lady, in which we may hope for a grant of our petitions, it is that of St. Joseph ; since St. Teresa assures us, in the sixth chapter of her life, that whatsoever we ask through Jesus Christ upon his feast, shall either have a successful grant, or be changed into a grant of something else more beneficial for the soul of the petitioner.

But if you desire to know more particularly how to spend the day of his feast with piety and profit, I will here set down six devotions, of which you may take your choice. I suppose you observe the feast of his espousals, which the Church keeps on the 22d of January, as well as the feast of his return out of Egypt, on the 17th of the same month ; and the memory, also, of his flight into Egypt, upon the 22d of December. These are unanimously agreed upon by all, but some differ about his chief feast, which the Greeks celebrate on the 26th of December, the day after Christmas, as Cardinal Baronius relates in his *Martyrology*. Others observe it on the 26th of June, the Eastern Church assuring us that he died on that day. But setting aside these days, we follow, as we ought to do, the ordination of the Catholic Church, of keeping it on the 19th of March. Wherefore, I shall here suggest how to spend this day profitably : proposing six different devotions, any of which you may make use of according as you find yourself inclined.

The first devotion, is, to follow the practice of the Carthusians, by observing his feast as of precept, though the place we live in should not observe it as such ; performing this acknowledgment of the many benefits received from him. It is also solemnized after this manner by the children of St. Teresa ; imitating in this their glorious foundress. Moreover, the fathers of the oratory kept it, who had nothing nearer at heart than Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The children, also, of St. Francis Sales, who are of the religious order of the Visitation, in this make known their own and their founder's inclinations ; and the nuns of the Word Incarnate, or the Annunciates, from their first beginning put themselves under his happy protection.

The manner of celebrating his feast is the same as we celebrate the feasts of other saints : some fast upon the eve in his honor ; others perform a penance and mortification for the same ; some communicate upon

his feast ; others abstain from all servile works ; some give more time to prayer than upon other days ; others read his life ; some spend the day in more religious exercises, performing all this in testimony of their love to St. Joseph.

The second devotion is to take him for your special patron for the following year ; or, should you already have chosen him for such, then to make choice of him for effecting some particular affair you have in hand of importance. Resolve to perform some devotions to him for this intention, for the space of some months, as the necessity or length of your affairs shall require.

Mother Jane of the Angels, of whom I have already spoken, begged of St. Joseph upon New Year's Day, that he would take her for that year, 1636, into his protection, and by his powerful intercession, obtain of our Saviour the blessing of her being delivered from all interior or exterior impediments in God's service ; and to dispossess her of those devils that tormented her, and free her from whatever else kept or retarded her soul from the union of his divine love. The night following, as she fell asleep, she seemed to feel a more particular devotion than ordinary, accompanied with an incredibly sweet smell, quite different from all other scents that are to be found in the perfumes of the world ; and, at the same time she heard a voice, that said to her, " Behold him to whom thou hast commended thyself." Hereupon the holy patriarch St. Joseph came into her mind, and her heart was filled with an extraordinary veneration for, and love of, him. She seemed in her sleep to see such a dazzling light, as far exceeded the brightness and splendor of the sun, within which she beheld a countenance full of wonderful majesty ; so beautiful that she neither found words to express it, nor any comparison whereby to discover her thoughts.

After all, the person spoke to her as follows : " Preserve patience and constancy in these difficulties you suffer ; support them with resignation, and endeavor to forget yourself, for God has favors in store to bestow upon you. Tell your exorcist, that if men labor not for your recovery, God will make it His own work. By all means let him continue his endeavors, and God, by his ministry, will expel the devil, that most of all hinders your devotions." This being said, all vanished, except the perfume, which lasted so strong for some time, that when she awoke, she thought her chamber had been perfumed.

Her thoughts were taken up the entire day following, with a confidence in our Saviour, and with the assurance of the assistance of St. Joseph. Nor was she deceived : for, five days after, upon the feast of the Epiphany, she found the effect of her protector's intercession, by being dispossessed of that devil that so maliciously interrupted her devotions ;

the father exorcist commanding him, in the presence of all the spectators, that for a mark of his going out, he should write the name of Mary upon her hand, as he did, although not without great difficulty and repugnance; fixing this name in very legible characters, immediately above St. Joseph's, which had been written there before, upon the going out of another devil: and these names, during her whole life, appeared as clear and distinct as they did the first day, which I myself was an eye-witness of, as the said religious passed by Lyons to go to Anesty, to visit the tomb of St. Francis of Sales, in the year 1638. I say nothing of the names of Jesus and St. Francis of Sales, that were to be seen on the back of the same hand, written at the command of the exorcist, as a mark of these devils' quitting their possession; which, by God's permission, they had taken from her body; that being not so much to my purpose, which is only to declare how much it conduced to her happiness to have recourse to St. Joseph for his protection, upon his own or any other feast:

The third devotion that may be performed to St. Joseph, is, to take him for our chief patron and advocate during our whole life, and yearly to renew this resolution upon his feast. I know a religious person of our society, who constantly practises this devotion every year; offering himself to him, by the recital of a prayer, similar to our sodalities to our blessed Lady, erected in our colleges, as publicly recited at their reception. I do not persuade you to perform this exercise every day, lest to some it might appear too great a burden, but only once a year, upon his chief feast; which his true clients cannot think too much to perform: and the first time we make use of this prayer it is fit to choose him for our particular patron and protector. The prayer is short, and therefore I shall insert it here:

“O holy Joseph, spouse of the most blessed Virgin Mary, I [*N. N.*] choose you this day for my special advocate and patron; and do firmly purpose never to forsake you, nor to say, do, nor suffer any under my charge to say or do anything against your honor. I therefore earnestly beseech you that you will please to take me for your perpetual and constant servant, and to assist me in all my actions, especially in the hour of my death. Amen.”

Make a firm resolution to keep this purpose, and renew it often, at holy Communion, or when you visit the blessed sacrament; whereby you will render this devotion pleasing to God, honorable to the saints, and profitable to yourself.

The fourth devotion may either be to offer mass (if a priest), or get a priest to offer one in honor of St. Joseph. That piece of the Eastern Church history, which was found and offered to Pope Adrian VI. as authentic, assures us that Christ, assisting St. Joseph at his death, gave him

His blessing, and promised to give the same to all those who should offer sacrifice to God, in honor of St. Joseph, upon the day of his glorious death, the 19th of March. But we have no sacrifice but that of the holy Mass. What greater blessing can we have, than the sacrifice of the Son of God, who was promised to us? Were this not true, yet all that we can perform is considerable. All that is of any worth, or that conduces to the glory of any saint, is included in the oblation of the divine sacrifice of the Mass, wherein Jesus Christ is offered in thanksgiving to His eternal Father, for all those favors and benefits He has heaped upon all saints, and particularly St. Joseph, raising him to so eminent a glory and dignity.

The fifth devotion is, to give alms, or bestow a dinner upon some poor man or widow, in honor of St. Joseph; and if you please, for the same end, relieve a poor woman and her little infant, to honor the created trinity, the infant Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; and to encourage you to so pious a work, St. Vincent Ferrerius recounts a wonderful story of a gentleman at Valence, who was very devout to all these three; and, among the rest of his devotions, used, every Christmas Day, to invite a woman with a suckling child, and an old man, to dine with him, and all this for the love he bore to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. This charity and devotion were so pleasing to God, that upon his death-bed he had the comfort to see them, who, as he departed, gave him this comfortable invitation to paradise: "Friend, you have every year invited us to a feast in your house; come, now, and we will receive you to our feast, and into a dwelling-place of the blessed, there to reign with us and them in all sorts of contentment, as long as a happy eternity shall last." Who can conceive how God rewards even the least service we do to Him or His saints? I wish we could always think upon this, and practise what these thoughts move us to perform.

The sixth devotion to St. Joseph is, to meditate upon the virtues, mysteries, or chief passages of his life. The morning before or after Communion is the most proper time for meditation, because the afternoon is reserved for evensong, sermon, or some other works of charity: as, visiting the sick in hospitals, or comforting and relieving prisoners. How and when these meditations are to be used, I shall declare in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEVOTIONS TO ST. JOSEPH DURING THE OCTAVE OF HIS FEAST, OR ACCORDING TO THE OPPORTUNITY OR AFFECTION OF HIS CLIENTS.



I CANNOT think there is a better means to pass the octave of St. Joseph with devotion and profit than by the consideration of his life and death, and the contemplation of his glory in heaven. Such reflections as these will increase our love and affection toward him, and move us to earnest and efficacious attempts to imitate his transcendent virtues. However, as some may not have an opportunity of making these meditations, and that those who know not how to meditate may make use of them, instead of spiritual reading, I have made the meditations longer than ordinary, which you will find at the end of this book. There are eight of them in all, for each day of the octave of his feast, in which are briefly contained the chief passages of the life, death, and glory of St. Joseph; and although the reading of them for your spiritual lecture will be very profitable, yet they will produce far greater profit and comfort in your soul, if you meditate upon them, whereby you will render a far greater devotion to St. Joseph than by the reading of them.

We have declared already, that all the devotions, honors, and respects that are rendered to other saints, ought to be given to St. Joseph; for whoever loves him as he deserves must think he never can sufficiently honor him, his merits exceeding all honors and devotions that can be paid to him. Wherefore, I should advise you to cause a Mass to be offered in his honor, or to perform some good work of charity or penance. You may say I invite you only to such a general testimony of affection as we give to all other saints; I will here propose to you such a general devotion as Mother Jane of the Angels, superior of the Ursulines, practised with admirable success; who proposed, for her deliverance, to communicate nine days together, in honor of St. Joseph. Upon the ninth day, one of the devils within her, of his own accord, presented himself to the exorcist during his exorcisms, and acknowledged he was commanded in the name of St. Joseph, as he left his station, to write the name of St. Joseph on her hand, which he swore he would perform, as he did soon after.

You may also say (if a priest), or get nine masses said in honor of St. Joseph, which was a devotion that very much assisted Father John Joseph

Servin, exorcist to this religious woman ; for, before he had ended his nine masses, the devil left her, writing, according to his promise, his name, in the presence of many, upon her bare hand ; and, among others, in the presence of an English nobleman, the Right Honorable Walter Montague, son of the Earl of Manchester, then a Protestant, who held her arm, which was the occasion of his conversion to the Catholic faith ; and of another, then an atheist, whose life is written, and who afterward was as renowned for sanctity as he before was infamous for atheism. You may also perform the devotion proper to all saints, by endeavoring to imitate his rare and particular virtues : as, the exercise of a retired and hidden sanctity ; the practice of angelic purity, even in marriage ; his humility, patience, and meekness in conversation ; his great recollection and wonderful silence ; who, as a holy person declared to Father Servin, " Was a very great keeper of silence ; and that in the house of our Saviour at Nazareth, he spoke very little, our blessed Lady and Jesus still much less ; and that his eyes performed to him the office of a tongue, without need of speaking."

Lastly, you may imitate the works of piety that St. Joseph practised ; but because these are also found in most saints, and therefore seem a general devotion, I will propose some that are particular and proper to St. Joseph, which other persons of piety, and particular devotees of his, have performed in his honor. They are six in number, some of which I hope you will find suitable to your devotion and inclination.

CHAPTER IX.

CONTAINING NINE OCCASIONS OF DEVOTIONS PROPER TO ST. JOSEPH, AND PRACTICED BY HIS CLIENTS.



THE first is, when you have lost anything you highly value, to have recourse to St. Joseph, to beg his help, or to suffer profitably this loss, if by his assistance you happen not to recover it. John Gerson, his great client, suggests this devotion : assuring us that such as on these occasions recommend themselves to this great patriarch presently recover what is lost, or by his assistance gain by their loss, bearing the same with patience and resignation. For a proof of what he asserts, he brings an example of the comfort which one of his acquaintance received who lost something of great value and recovered it by this means. It is perhaps on this account that anxious persons have recourse to him, since they have lost so great a jewel as the repose of conscience and peace of mind—this being the dearest and most precious treasure we have in this world ; for we may assure ourselves, and certainly believe, that he who felt the loss of Jesus, and the grief it cost him, will not fail to comfort those who implore his assistance in the like exigency.

The second is, to take occasion, for St. Joseph's sake, to love all his clients, whether they be in heaven or upon earth, and especially those who have borne the happy name of Joseph ; but, above all, to show a particular love and devotion to St. Teresa, his particular devotee : and not only to those who are in heaven, but also to those you know to be particularly devoted to him upon earth. For your love to them upon this account will become no less pleasing to St. Joseph than if they bore his name ; and bearing a tenderness and love to those who do so is very pleasing to St. Joseph. Wherefore, to help you to practise this devotion, I will here give you a list of some eminent persons who have borne his name, and upon this account received from God the particular favors He bestowed upon him. I shall begin with the patriarch Joseph, who, though he lived so many ages before our great St. Joseph, yet was a type of him ; and, probably, upon that account, might have received his name, with those other extraordinary favors God bestowed upon him.

The first, therefore, in the list of those who bore the name of Joseph is the patriarch Joseph, of the old law ; on whom the Holy Ghost gives a very great eulogium in the forty-ninth chapter of Ecclesiasticus, calling

him "Ruler and prince of his brethren, the stay and support of his nation and people;" who deserves also the first place, he being not only the first to whom this name was given, but also a type of our St. Joseph, upon account of his chastity. The character, also, that the Holy Ghost gives of the patriarch agrees with our Joseph in a far more eminent degree than it even did to the patriarch, he being a prince and ruler, not only over his brethren, but governor to the Mother and Son of God, being their support in all their necessities, and saving Him who was to save not only one, but all nations throughout the world.

The second is Joseph of Arimathea, that noble centurion, praised by the Holy Ghost for his love to Christ in a time of extreme danger: for, when those who were friends of Christ fled from Him, being looked upon as enemies to the state, he courageously asked His body, and took care of embalming it, laying it in a new monument he had prepared for himself; hereby intimating, by the love and care he took of it after his death, our St. Joseph's love to the living body of Jesus. He also resembles him in recovering things lost, as may appear by the following example: St. Mary Vasquez of Mela, of the order of St. Dominic, and of the Monastery of Zamata, in Spain, had a singular devotion to St. Joseph of Arimathea, upon account of the tender devotion he showed to the precious body of Jesus—begging it, taking it from the cross, embalming it, and laying it in his own monument; and when her monastery had lost a paper of great importance, she had recourse to him for it. Soon after there came a person well-mounted to the monastery gate, where, alighting from his horse, he asked for Mary Vasquez, and as soon as she came, delivered her the paper, and returned without any conversation with her.

The third is St. Joseph, son to the Samaritan woman who gave water to our Saviour at the well, while He rested Himself in the journey He made with His disciples, who, with his brother Victor, obtained the glorious crown of martyrdom. Their mother also shared in their victory, as a reward for her charity to Jesus, whose feast is kept upon the 20th of March, according to Baronius's *Martyrology*—who now drink of that water their mother begged, that takes away all thirst for eternity.

The fourth is Joseph the Just, one of the seventy-two disciples of our Saviour, to whom the Holy Ghost gave the same title of Just as to our great St. Joseph, so esteemed by the apostles for his sanctity that they named him with St. Matthias to be substituted in the place of Judas Iscariot.

The fifth is Joseph, by excellence called the "sacred poet," whose delight was to compose verses in honor of the saints, whom they rewarded by appearing to, and assisting him at his death, and accompanying him to everlasting life. His feast is kept upon the 3d of April, according

to the Greek *Martyrology*; but, according to Baronius, on the 15th of February.

The sixth is Joseph Stenald, called Herman in the world, of the order of St. Norbert; so singularly devoted to the Mother of God that she took him for her spouse, and gave him the name of Joseph, to the end that in all things he should resemble her first spouse. The manner how it occurred is thus related: The religious among whom he lived began first to call him Joseph upon account of virginal bashfulness, which caused him to blush upon the least occasion, even when the religious called him Joseph, which made him complain to the abbot, though without redress, for calling him so; and the night after, in time of his prayer in the choir, he saw a most beautiful lady coming toward him, full of majesty and glory, with two angels attending her. The one asked the other to whom this beautiful lady should be espoused? "To whom," replied the other, "but to him you see before you?" Poor Herman was surprised at this discourse, and so confounded that he wished himself hidden in some corner where none might see him. But one of the angels took him by the hand and led him to the altar, and there took his virginal hand and joined it with the hand of the sacred Virgin, saying, "By the order of God, my Master, I give you the Virgin of Virgins for your spouse; and with the title of spouse, I give you the name of Joseph." This favor he thus received, which the Virgin afterward seconded by her frequent visits: often putting her dear infant in his arms, as she was wont to do into St. Joseph's—often calling him by the endearing name of Joseph; sometimes in his cell, other times as he walked about the house; which increased in his heart the most tender love he before had for the blessed Virgin. (See Surius, Apr. 11.)

The seventh is Joseph the Earl, who was so wonderfully obstinate in the Jewish religion as even to resist God Himself, who wrought several miracles by means of the holy cross, in his presence; and our Saviour also, by several visions, invited him to the true faith, but without success. But these working nothing upon him, God visited him with very sharp maladies, which also for a long time did not succeed; but their continuance by degrees softened his heart, and caused him to become so good a Christian that Constantine, to settle him in the true faith, created him an earl. But these earthly honors hindered him not from exercising true humility, and becoming a true servant of God; whereby he attained to so high a pitch of sanctity as to be canonized, and to receive the best and most lasting title of honor, of being a saint in heaven; and his feast is kept on the 22d of July.

The eighth is Joseph Hildegond, who died the 20th of April, the first woman who ever bore the name of Joseph, which thus happened: Her

father, after her mother's death, and settling her sister religious in a monastery, resolved to visit the holy places in Jerusalem, and fearing lest in his absence any misfortune might happen to his daughter should he leave her behind him, he having no other child left to take care of but her, caused her to take the name of Joseph, and to take the habit of a man, the better and more easily to accompany him in his pilgrimage. She submitted to her father's pleasure, and both of them departed from Cullen, their native town, to begin their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But her father, dying on the way, left poor Joseph behind him in very great perplexity what she should do, who still continued her journey, though she met with very troublesome adventures ; but her constancy in God's service enabled her happily to overcome them all.

The ninth was Joseph Matthew, the sixth person of the holy order of Capuchins, famous for sanctity and miracles ; for, twice traveling, the day being advanced, and having gotten no alms to support himself, or wherewith to strengthen him on his journey, a beautiful young man came to him, and the first time gave him a white loaf, and the second, two, with these comfortable words, "Take, Joseph, these alms which our Saviour sends you, and give Him thanks for this benefit."

The tenth is Father Joseph Anchieta, of the Society of Jesus, styled the Apostle of the Brazils, as St. Xaverius is styled the Apostle of the Indies ; who, upon account of the many miracles he wrought, may also be styled a Moses of the said society, working them in all kinds, and upon all occasions.

Behold here ten Josephs, worthy to be honored, no less for their virtue than out of love to Joseph, whose name they bear, and who deserves that, in consideration of his worth, we should set a high esteem upon one who has any relation to him, either by bearing his name or by imitating his virtues ; and I shall therefore end this piece of devotion I recommended to you, by recounting what I received a few months ago from a very faithful servant of God, a religious woman of Lyons and a great devotee of St. Joseph's, who told me she was often wont to pray and to recommend herself to the glorious Joseph in heaven ; and she assured me that she found very great help and comfort from this devotion, for, by their intercession, they obtained for her what she desired them to help her in.

The third particular devotion we may show to St. Joseph is, to take all occasions to honor his name.

First, by giving the name of Joseph in baptism, confirmation, or entrance into religion, to any one who shall have any dependence on us, or by taking it ourselves on the two last-mentioned occasions. We have an example of this devotion, in our blessed Lady's giving it to blessed Herman, which I related ; and, God be praised, it is in this age a frequent de-

votion for seculars as well as religious to desire to bear his name, and with much reason.

Second, to consecrate churches and chapels to the honor of St. Joseph, and give his name to provinces and religious houses. In the order of St. Teresa this devotion is commonly practised; and our Saviour Himself gave the name of Joseph to the Monastery of Avila. Father Francis Canilec, one of our society, no less renowned for his virtue than for his noble birth, founded the house in Bell-court, at Lyons, and gave it the name of Joseph, to testify his affection to the spouse of the Mother of God. His example gave occasion, several years after, to Father Cotton, to give the same name to the church he there built, so that whatsoever we possessed in that place might be under the protection of St. Joseph.

Third, by frequently repeating the name of Joseph, as Gaspar Bond the good Minim, was wont to do, as I have mentioned. This devotion is very easy, if we but take the pleasure he took in pronouncing the holy names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Fourth, to wear rings on which the name of Joseph is engraved, either by itself or with the other two names, Jesus and Mary: and, to encourage you to this devotion, when the plague caused great destruction at Lyons, I knew many who wore such rings for this intention—that St. Joseph would protect them from the infection—and with so great success that not so much as one of the families of those who wore them, nor of the house where they lodged, was infected, God giving a great blessing to this devotion.

Fifth, to begin our chief actions under the auspicious favor of his name, as the governor of Quebec did, at the dedication of the church of Quebec in New France, 1637, before which he planted a standard with a triple crown and wreaths, with escutcheons, in which were written in capitals these three names, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; which standard was no sooner erected than it was saluted by the soldiers with a volley of musket shot.

The fourth particular devotion to St. Joseph is to imitate the love of St. Teresa to her good father, as she styled him, by taking occasion to invite others to become his clients, and omitting nothing that may contribute to his honor and glory; which is so grateful to the blessed Virgin, that she gave thanks to St. Teresa for having contributed and incited persons to this devotion toward her spouse over the Church, especially throughout Europe; and who John Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, also imitated. For, what did he not do on this point? He composed an office and Mass for his feast; he wrote to several bishops, to induce them to order his feast to be celebrated in their bishoprics with devotion and solemnity, as a feast of obligation, and by their own exam-

ples to move the people to observe it. His ordinary conversations and entertainments with those who visited him were upon this subject. Moreover, those who enter into the confraternity of St. Joseph, and by their piety and example move others to the like devotion, also imitate St. Teresa's and the pious chancellor's devotion toward him.


The fifth is, frequently to take occasion to thank St. Joseph for the labor and pains he took for Jesus and Mary, and the services he did for them; "For how is it possible," says St. Teresa, "to think upon what the Queen of Heaven and her little Infant suffered upon earth, without giving thanks to St. Joseph for his charitable assistance in their sufferings?" The thoughts of those passages of charity he exercised, as bearing Jesus in his arms, helping his spouse to dress Him, laying Him in His cradle, and such like ordinary actions, though but inconsiderable, it is not to be imagined what tender affections the consideration of them breeds in our hearts, and how they move us to exercise greater services to Jesus, and also a love to St. Joseph, who thereby expressed his affection to Him.

The sixth particular devotion we may exercise toward St. Joseph is, to take occasion, when any affairs of importance happen, to address ourselves to St. Joseph, and wholly to commit them to his care. It is also a good devotion frequently to ask his blessing, and to repose a confidence in him as in a father; beseeching him to obtain of his son and spouse such an assistance as we shall on all occasions stand in need of. This the devout Ursuline, Jane of the Angels, whom I have frequently mentioned, used to do before and after her exorcisms, in which she suffered great agitation of body from the devil; wherefore, to prepare herself the better to suffer, she presented herself before his image, and begged his blessing and assistance, whereby she found herself extremely fortified.

To these I may add some other devotions, which several persons exercise. Some in their necessities say the beads in his honor. Others never deny anything asked them in the name and for the sake of St. Joseph. But I should be too tedious, did I insert all the devotions the affections of his clients suggested to them: what I have already said is sufficient; for whatever may be done to other saints, either by prayers, vows, or any other respects, that and much more may be done to him. But to incite the more to this, in the following chapters I will set down what assistance he renders upon all occasions to his clients who endeavor to express their love and devotion toward him by such practices.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE ASSISTANCE ST. JOSEPH GIVES TO HIS DEVOUT CLIENTS TOWARD ATTAINING INTERIOR PERFECTIONS, AND IN WHAT THIS PERFECTION CONSISTS.

 O give you a satisfactory account of the care St. Joseph takes to render his clients interior and spiritual persons, I must first declare to you what is meant by interior perfection, and in what this spiritual and interior life consists, there being very few who solidly attend thereto ; therefore there is great need of so powerful an assistance for obtaining it as St. Joseph.

An interior or spiritual life is that which minds nothing but perfection, and which rests in the virtuous actions of the soul : namely, of faith, hope, charity, religion, adoration, thanksgiving, humiliation, with a perfect and sincere intention, without any mixture of worldly ends, and in the performance of all exterior and corporal actions with an interior spirit and presence of mind ; beholding God present, and being carried with a tender affection toward Him, while performing the outward action.

This is called a spiritual or interior life ; because it consists not in the exterior or corporal action ; but because it acts interiorly in the depths of the soul and within the spirit or mind only ; and what is thus begun in spirit must afterward pass to our exterior actions, which are but of very small value if not accompanied with this interior life or virtue, there being no comparison between the inward and outward actions ; and if we work not by this interior spirit and purity of intention, all the pains we take are lost ; we labor much, and gain little or nothing, what great things soever in appearance we may perform ; but, working after this manner, we heap up everlasting treasures with so much profit that the least action wonderfully advances and increases our perfection, and gains a great degree of glory in heaven. This caused St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, after the glory of the blessed Aloysius of Gonzaga was revealed to her, to say he had gained that sublime state by his interior actions, in which lie all the perfections of the soul ; so that this interior and spiritual life is one and the same thing.

But it is not so easy as one may conceive, to enter into this interior or inward state, or to lead such a spiritual life as I speak of ; since to be much recollected, and to enter into ourselves, is the way to become exteriorly perfect. To do this, you must wean yourself from all attention

to creatures, lay aside interest and human respects, such as gain, honor, flesh and blood, give yourself to recollection and prayer, and thereby unite yourself to God. To do this you must constantly walk in the presence of God; seek nothing but His divine will; subdue your passions, and practise all sorts of virtues belonging to the interior powers of your soul. But all this is very hard to perform, and hence it follows that very few attain it; and for this reason, a great master of spirit well said, "Few are perfect." But, on the contrary, imperfect persons are very many: those who permit themselves to sink into the affection of self-love, give their will the reins, and yield to all that sense requires, languishing in sensuality, rather than practising true virtue: of whom St. Paul complains, "All seek their own or themselves, not Jesus, or the things that belong to Him." But care must be taken by those who are clients of St. Joseph, that they do not soon and easily believe themselves to have obtained this interior or spiritual life because they find some sensible feelings of devotion; but when they find their passions, ill habits, and all their imperfections perfectly subdued, and that they have become fervent and constant in the practice of all virtues, then they may hope that they have made some progress in the spiritual life.

This spiritual state was very well understood by St. Mary Magdalen of the Ursulines, by the reply she made to a sister inferior in government, when she came to make her complaints to her.

This sister, coming to her and expressing how great a desire she had of the spiritual advancement of the monastery, had told her that she had observed some imperfections in certain of the religious, which gave disedification; telling her, too, that such and such persons were guilty of them. The superior took in good part the intelligence she gave her, and with her wonted sweetness promised in time to redress them, and provide a seasonable cure. But this religious, being of the number of those who would reform all at once, and who thought herself far from wanting any such reform, unsatisfied with this sweet answer of her superior, told her that a speedy action ought to be taken, and so efficacious a one as might keep the evil from spreading; and she knew none better than to divide the monastery, and that all who were stubborn, and of a choleric humor, sluggish in rising, tepid, contentious, and imperfect, should go by themselves into another house; and the other part of the community, the good, fervent, perfect, and affable, who had made progress in virtue, practised mortification, and were exact observers of religious discipline, should remain in this.

The good mother still patiently gave ear to all she said, and sweetly asked her, when she had ended her discourse, which of these she designed to be in? "Among those that are perfect," replied the religious,

“that I may have no trouble or vexation of mind to hinder me in virtue.” “And I,” replied the superior, “will accompany the less perfect; first, because I am one of their number, and also out of compassion to them, that by having occasion of showing sweetness and patience toward them, I may gain them, and have a greater subject of merit.” When the sister heard this admirable reply from her superior, she was silent, and saw how much she was deceived by thinking herself one of the more perfect; and moreover saw that there were not any such, the monastery being slenderly furnished with subjects. There would have been scarcely six left in the house; for, in effect, in a community of three-score religious, you will scarcely find six true interior persons; and among a hundred religious men, or five hundred seculars, it would be hard to find ten such as we speak of, who are eminent in this interior life, and make the desire of perfection their chief endeavor.

From whence we may gather how great an advantage the clients of St. Joseph have, who by his intercession obtain so great a blessing, than which nothing is so considerable, nothing so hard to obtain, nor anything that ought more earnestly to be sought after. What a comfort is it, then, to have so powerful an assistant, who sweetens all difficulties, lending us his efficacious hand; whereby he manifests that God has left to his care the bringing up of those who efficaciously desire to become eminent in this interior life, as a recompense of the interior life he led at Nazareth, with his sacred family; and that he is the ruler and governor of those souls who desire to have their virtues and actions concealed from the world, and only known to God—as a young man, greatly enlightened by God, testified to Father Severin of the Society of Jesus.

This father, accidentally meeting him, and finding him wonderfully replenished with extraordinary gifts and graces of God, said that in all his life he had never met with the like; and although he had never been instructed, and only served a priest until he was eighteen years of age, yet he spoke more spiritually, not only like a divine, but also like a saint. The father proposed many questions to him, and among the rest he asked him if he were devout to St. Joseph. To which he made answer that for the six years past he had been his protector and director; and affirmed that our Saviour Himself had given him St. Joseph for this end, adding that he was the greatest of saints, after the blessed Virgin; that he had the plenitude of the Holy Ghost with the apostles; and that he was the master and spiritual director of those souls who addicted themselves to a hidden interior life and conversation with God.

To prove this truth, it is only necessary to observe the assistance St. Joseph gives in this belief, and the particular desire he has to assist and help retired and interior souls; and to become master, director, and pro-

tector of those souls that aim at this hidden and spiritual life ; as the following passage will declare, which I had from the mouth of a religious person, who served God in a monastery of the seraphic St. Francis's order, who, as she disposed herself to make the spiritual exercise, according to the advice I gave her out of *Philagie*, she resolved to take a saint for her protector, to assist her in so important an affair, and inclined to choose St. Francis, as being father and patron of her order. While her thoughts were thus employed, an interior trouble of mind seized her, and raised a doubt whether or no this choice were acceptable to the will of God. Whereupon she resolved to draw lots, and to write the name of St. Joseph, who came first to her mind, with that of St. Francis, separately on little billets ; and twice together the first she drew was St. Joseph, which was quite sufficient to let her see it was God's will to take him for her director in this her solitude.

Some time after, God gave her a strong impulse to make choice of some saint, that might for her life take care of her interior. Hereupon she thought to choose some of those saints for whom, from her tender years, she had had a great devotion. Nevertheless it came to her mind to put St. Joseph among the rest. After she had well mingled the papers or suffrages, St. Joseph, as before, twice fell to her lot. However, though it was pleasing to her that she had thus drawn him, yet she begged of God that she might certainly know His divine will, to permit her, if it were His divine pleasure, to light upon the same lot the third time. Wherefore, mingling them again, the first that came to her hand was St. Joseph, which success made her entirely acknowledge and receive him for her spiritual father, protector, and faithful director of her interior religious life.

But to give a still greater incitement to choose him for our master and director in this interior life, not only St. Teresa counseled all who desired to profit in prayer, and in this spiritual kind of interior life, to have recourse to him, and take him for their master ; but also his Virgin spouse, the Mother of God, who knows his power and goodness, gave the same counsel to a religious person, who, upon account of her name, and that of her order, had a filial affection for her, and a confidence and tender devotion to her. This religious was very much disquieted by some temptations that she suffered, especially in time of prayer, giving her a great deal of trouble and discouragement, as they made her think she should never be able to treat God with that fervor, nor have so open and liberal a heart toward His divine Majesty, as she found necessary to serve Him. Hereupon she addressed herself to the blessed Virgin, as to her tender Mother, and affectionately told her, with a filial confidence, that she must needs obtain for her this liberty of spirit, and inspire and direct her

what saint she should choose to help her herein, and in whose assistance she might securely confide ; that she might express her gratitude during her whole life, for obtaining by her assistance so great a benefit. She had no sooner ended her petition than she obtained a grant thereof ; for she found that St. Joseph was very vividly presented to her mind, and with great interior sweetness ; and the excellence and great perfection of this saint were so clearly set before her, that she retained the idea thereof during her whole life, and ever after confided in him in all and for all, as in a loving father, who immediately freed her from the pain she was in, not only for the present, but for the future ; and when at any time any of her former temptations returned, she found no disquiet, nor did she do anything but confidently cast herself into the tender arms of her dear father, and immediately found peace of mind, accompanied with a most comfortable union and entertainment with God.

Having thus shown you how willingly St. Joseph takes upon himself to help souls to lead this spiritual and interior life, I shall now declare how he does it, and the helps he gives toward gaining this interior perfection, by procuring those things that are required for it and conduce to it, such as prayer, presence of God, peace of mind, and the interior practice of all sorts of virtue.

As for prayer, St. Teresa assures us in her life that he who cannot find a master to teach him how to pray, must choose St. Joseph for his guide and director, and he will certainly find out the way to perform this exercise well.

To confirm this, I know two persons who found great difficulty in prayer ; the one, by frequently recommending himself to St. Joseph, the other, by undertaking the recital of a few prayers in his honor, found themselves assisted by him, even as soon as they had performed these devotions ; and they have since, by his intercession, obtained so great a facility in mental prayer that there is no greater consolation to them than this exercise.

A religious person of my acquaintance, being newly professed in a holy order, desiring very earnestly, as she told me, the gift of quiet prayer, and to be freed from distractions, found herself inwardly moved to have recourse to this admirable master ; to whom she most readily addressed herself, and did it with such a confidence in his help, that he obtained this gift for her ; and she moreover owns, that when she meditates upon any point of St. Joseph's virtues and perfections, there is nothing else to be thought on but what ordinarily happens in the meditations on the blessed Trinity, the blessed sacrament, and such like high mysteries ; acts of admiration, submission, entering into her own nothingness, and contemplation of so high and sublime a greatness.

But the other favors she received of this saint, by means of recommending herself to him, are equal to these already related. When she goes to bed, she begs something she wants, and receives it ; she desires to be freed from impure dreams—he obtains for her this petition also. So happy is it to have so powerful a master, and so good a father.

Now, as to the presence of God—another thing conducing to this interior life is this, that He certainly obtains it for His children and devout clients.

I knew some who continually walked in the presence of God, whereby they were guided in even their least actions, with very great attention, yet without the least hindrance to the exact performance of their duty ; so that they seemed to me rather angels than men. And asking them how they obtained this happiness, they assured me it was the effect of St. Joseph's intercession ; having begged it of him who was himself thirty years in the continual presence of the Word incarnate, and found by experience the good that proceeded from it ; who is, therefore, ready to help recollected souls to a participation in this incomparable comfort of being constantly in God's sight, which influences and facilitates all their actions.

But St. Joseph's help is no less efficacious in obtaining peace of mind, another necessary disposition for obtaining this interior life. Among many other examples I could bring, of my own knowledge, I will here produce one : A certain person, of the number of those who think extraordinary devotion and divine spirituality consist in discoursing of such high points as are above their own as well as others' reach, either to understand or explain, yet will venture at new propositions, to make themselves admired as persons more than ordinarily enlightened by God, came to a monastery, and at the gate broached one of his fantastical opinions for a truth : that the humanity of our Saviour was in all places, as well as His divinity ; and that we might have the presence of one as well as of the other. This new proposition wrought some trouble in those who were present, especially in one of them, who recounted the passage to me, telling me she was not able any longer to make her prayer, but that this new and extravagant doctrine came into her head and so darkened her soul that she was able to do nothing ; wherefore, by my direction, as soon as this thought occurred and troubled her, she recommended herself to St. Joseph, and begged of him to disperse this cloud. She had scarcely finished her petition when her trouble vanished, and her wonted peace and tranquillity of mind returned after such a manner that she nevermore thought of that discourse, and resolved never again to give ear to such novelties, which nothing but a vain curiosity can lead to.

As to the gaining all sorts of interior virtues, required also for this in-

terior and spiritual life, I need only tell you St. Teresa's thoughts : " There is no sort of virtue," says she, " which is not lodged, as in its proper seat, in the soul of those who serve St. Joseph with a faithful heart, and recommend themselves to his prayers ; for one may perceive in them, in a little time, incredible advancements. It is but making trial, therefore, and having recourse to him for these ends, expecting and assuring ourselves of a happy success, by his favorable assistance." (See the 6th chapter of St. Teresa's Life.)

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE ASSISTANCE ST. JOSEPH GIVES TO SPIRITUAL MALADIES, ESPECIALLY TO THOSE SOULS WHICH ARE IN A BAD STATE.

THE vision St. Teresa had upon the Assumption of our blessed Lady, while she considered her past life, is a proof of St. Joseph's help in all our spiritual infirmities : at which time, a divine transport seizing her soul, she saw it clothed with a resplendent white robe. At first she perceived not who put it on, but at last she saw the Mother of God on the one side, and St. Joseph on the other ; and understood that this was done by them to signify that at the same time her soul was freed from all sin ; which proves how careful and desirous the spouse of Mary is to drive away all spiritual distempers, and restore purity to our souls ; so that in all attacks of violent passion—in any dangerous temptation, or falls into any imperfection—there are no better means, under Christ, to free ourselves, and obtain a particular help and assistance, than by calling upon St. Joseph.

We see daily examples of this by the great and wonderful change we find in the conversation of those who are noted for their devotion to this saint. What victories do we not perceive they have gained over their passions ? What mortifications do they not use to subdue their senses ? With what peace and tranquillity do they not perform all this ? I knew some who could not forbear jesting, which serves for nothing but to wound and destroy charity ; others who had strange aversions against those who suited not with their humor, not being able to suffer so much as their presence, much less their conversation ; others that were so passionately carried away with private and particular affections that they could neither pray, labor, nor perform any of their duties ; which, if not cured, is a very dangerous impurity. But, to my great joy and comfort, I ever found all these passions vanish after they had performed some devotion to St. Joseph for the intention of mortifying this ill habit of words, of uncharitable and malicious thoughts that caused these aversions, after applications made to St. Joseph for his assistance. I knew a young woman violently attacked with a passion of love, which she freed herself from by resolving, in honor of St. Joseph, to abstain for nine days from the conversation of the person she loved ; which she performed, and, recommending herself every day during that time to St. Joseph, to beg his help to overcome

it, she was perfectly freed from this tormenting and dangerous spirit ; and, that she might nevermore be troubled with the like, she resolved, during her whole life, to say daily St. Joseph's litany, whereby she obtained the happy end she aimed at : but, to put her in mind that this constant devotion to St. Joseph was the means whereby she obtained this favor, whenever she neglected the ordinary time of performing it, she found some small returns of this passion, which immediately vanished at its performance.

I knew another person who, by a violent attack of the same passion, had lost her sleep, and was in great danger of losing her senses also, for she was seized with despairing thoughts and doubts of her perseverance in religion, on being counseled to say, for nine days together, the beads of St. Joseph I before spoke of—some of her friends joining their devotions with hers to St. Joseph for this end—at the end of the nine days she found herself perfectly cured.

There are many such like favors which this great saint obtains for his faithful servants who have recourse to him, by obtaining for them a victory over those passions they find themselves seized with, which often they have not confidence to discover, and which pass only between God and themselves. These I have set down, to encourage all in the like circumstances to have recourse to the great St. Joseph.

Isidore, in the tenth chapter of his fourth book, recounts a very remarkable example of a gentleman of Venice, so devoted to St. Joseph that daily he was wont to recite before his image several devotions in his honor. This person at one time was lying dangerously ill, without thinking, as he should have done, of a penitent confession, his cares being rather taken up about the health of his body than that of his soul. In this condition St. Joseph, mindful of his past devotion to him, showed himself a true friend and father to his soul by appearing to him, and warning him to make a good and speedy confession, and to prepare himself for death, which was nearer than he imagined. He followed this counsel, put himself in a good state, received the last sacraments, and, assisted by Joseph in his last agony, made a most happy end, and received thereby a reward for his constant devotions to this saint.

Another example, of a later date, I received from the testimony of persons most worthy of credit. A father of the society was desired earnestly by some friends to say a Mass, and another of the same society, not a priest, to offer nine communions in honor of St. Joseph, that, by his powerful intercession, a near kinsman of theirs might be drawn from a licentious life, in which he had been so miserably plunged for the space of five years that by no means or prayers they could use could they prevail with him to live even like a man of honor before men, as became his

quality, much less a Christian before God, as his sacred character and habit required. At the time these prayers were offered for this person he fell grievously sick, as his relative desired he might, in case no other means could be found to reform him ; and it so fell out according to his wish : the distemper increased to such an extremity that he received the last sacraments, and then miraculously recovered, with a resolution hereafter to employ his time and all his endeavors in a work of great importance to God's glory ; which he faithfully performed, to the great edification of all who knew him, who were witnesses of this great change wrought by St. Joseph. This conversion happened at Paris.

Another conversion, no less strange than this, happened at Lyons, where a young man of good condition, who passed his youth in the fear of God, was resolved to quit the world and entirely give himself to God's service for the greater security of his salvation ; but this design not pleasing his parents, they endeavored to divert him from it, but very unhappily, for, seeing himself frustrated of his design of executing his good desires, his former fervor cooling by little and little, he fell, from a remissness in his devotions, to an entire neglect of them. At last he quite loosed the reins of his passions, and gave himself up to all shameful liberties. Then he betook himself to the war, where he exercised all the licentiousness of a soldier's life, so that there was no excess in which he was not the ringleader. In the meantime, his father and mother, conscious of their great fault, having a sense of piety and God's honor and glory, fell into unconsolable affliction of mind, acknowledging their error, and never giving over, by letters and good counsel, by themselves and friends, to persuade him to quit his irregularities ; but all in vain, his heart being obstinate. At length, as their last refuge, they had recourse to St. Joseph, daily beseeching him to reclaim and bring back this prodigal child by taking him under his protection. The third day they had earnestly offered these devotions the young man returned home, cast himself at his parents' feet, begged their pardon for his follies, began a new life, and corresponded to his former vocation by entering into religion, in which God rewarded him with perseverance ; all which favors he obtained by St. Joseph's intercession.

We have in our church in Lyons a votive picture of a woman extremely afflicted for the debaucheries of her husband. No endeavors for reclaiming him prevailing, she had recourse to St. Joseph, making a vow to him for obtaining her husband's conversion ; which she had no sooner performed than his thoughts were quite changed, and he was never after disloyal to his consort.

A person of worth, and a confident friend of mine, wrote to me, knowing I had a piece of work in hand in honor of St. Joseph, assuring

me that St. Joseph had delivered her from the most miserable slavery and thralldom of mind, which happened to her after the following manner : She, having failed in a matter of great importance, even against a vow made to God, could not bring herself to a plain and clear confession of her fault. Finding this great difficulty and repugnance, she fully resolved to overcome so dangerous a bashfulness ; and for this end, that she might obtain grace of God to put her soul in a good state, for nine days together she said the Hymn and Prayer of St. Joseph, and upon the ninth day she felt a strange remorse for her offence, found sufficient courage to declare all and to make a good confession, which she performed with a very great sorrow and a firm purpose of amendment ; and resolved ever after to carry about her an image of St. Joseph, even in the night, to prevent her from bad dreams, whereby she acknowledged having received very singular help and assistance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ASSISTANCE WHICH ST. JOSEPH GIVES IN CURING CORPORAL DISEASES, ESPECIALLY THE PLAGUE.

THE examples I have here set down I have chosen out of many more, of which I was either an eye-witness or well acquainted with the persons upon whom they were wrought, in the city of Lyons, where I now live, or else are such as have irrefragable authority to prove their truth.

None can doubt what St. Teresa recounts of the miraculous cures he wrought upon her in her youth, and in those very long and lasting distempers she had after she was religious; who for eight months lost the use of all her limbs, suffered frequent faintings and palpitations of the breasts, which were her ordinary distempers for three years together; from all which she was delivered by the intercession of St. Joseph, to whom she was extremely devoted, and whose feast she kept every year with very great solemnity, she being upon that day suddenly freed from those distempers which kept her so long in bed, and enabled to rise and walk as if she had never been sick.

Sister Jane of the Angels, being brought to death's door by a mortal pleurisy, there being, according to the physician's account, no hopes of her recovery, received St. Joseph's assistance, who appeared to her, laid his hand upon the side where the pain was, and so cured her; but this being a very miraculous cure, and the circumstances very extraordinary, I cannot omit to give you a particular account of the chief passages, leaving the rest to a printed relation of it, approved by the bishop of Poitiers, and showing how she recovered by a miraculous ointment that the saint applied; and, because the most satisfactory relation I think that can be made of it is that by herself in a letter to a friend, I shall therefore put it down in her own words:

"I fell into very violent convulsive fits, like one ready to give up the ghost. I found myself deprived of all sense, yet my judgment was still at liberty; and, as I lay in this sad condition, there appeared to me a great and beautiful cloud, on which, on my right side, stood my good angel, of incomparable beauty, like a youth of eighteen years of age, with fair disheveled hair. This youth had in his right hand a flaming fair wax taper; on the other side, on the cloud, was my holy father St. Joseph,

with a countenance surpassing the sun in brightness, and a majesty more than human, resembling in age a man of forty or forty-five years of age, with a fine head of hair, of a chestnut color, very long; and, as I perceived, he looked upon one of the assistants that stood by me after a very sweet manner, full of amity and affection. Then, beholding me, he laid his hand upon that side where, from the beginning, was the principal source of my distemper, and anointed me with oil, or some such liquor. The place he anointed remained something moist, and at the same instant I found myself perfectly recovered, as I declared to the standers-by."

This is what she recounts of finding herself very well, out of her bed, which she had kept, upon account of her fever, fourteen days, occasioned by a formed pleurisy, that gave her extraordinary pain. She had been bled nine times in twelve days, which caused such a weakness that she was scarcely able to turn in her bed, expecting nothing but death. But Mr. Faveon, her physician, and a Protestant, was, most of all, astonished when, entering her chamber, not knowing anything of the miracle, he saw all the company on their knees, the sick woman's bed empty and covered, and saw her whom but a little before he had left as dying, rising from her knees, walking in her religious habit about the chamber, without any help, and coming toward him with a smiling countenance; to whom she recounted her miraculous recovery, giving him also thanks for the pains he had taken. This surprise was so sudden that he remained for a long time in silent astonishment, not knowing what to say or think; but, in the end, coming to himself, he acknowledged it to be a wonderful change: "But God," said he, "is omnipotent."

But a still greater miracle soon followed this, of which this was partly the occasion; for the rest of the ointment remaining upon a linen cloth, wherewith the recovered person wiped the place St. Joseph had anointed, not only retained a sweet and aromatic smell (as I experienced, as this religious person, so miraculously cured, passed by Lyons), but has also the power of working miracles, which it likewise communicates to beads, medals, images, and papers that have only touched this miraculous ointment, or the cloth that wiped it off the religious person's side.

The second miracle wrought by the ointment is as follows: Madame de Laubougemont, about eight days after Sister Jane of the Angels had so miraculously recovered, being pregnant, happened, after the same manner, to fall sick of a pleurisy at Trevaux, which four of the ablest physicians of that place judged incurable, and therefore thought it in vain to apply any remedy; but God inspired the patient and her husband to make use of the remedy St. Joseph had afforded to the aforesaid religious; and, therefore, they sent an express to Loudon to desire they might make use of the cloth that had wiped off the heavenly balsam from

the place St. Joseph had anointed. This having been brought to the sick lady, the very smell of it filled her soul with joy, and the application of it to her right side perfectly recovered her; and a few hours after she was delivered of a child, which the doctor and surgeon judged to have been a whole month dead in her body.

A young man, called Claud Murner, at Laubougemont, was afflicted with an extraordinary swelling in one of his ribs, that reached to his reins, and caused such a violent fever that all concluded he would either be a cripple as long as he lived, or else that the breaking of the ulcer would occasion his death, from the abundance of humors gathered together, and had caused so great an inflammation and swelling as gave him a very great deal of pain, so that he could not lie in any other posture in his bed but upon his belly, which excited a great compassion in those who visited him, among whom was one of his relatives, a father of the society, from whom I received this account. He, hearing the doctors and surgeons of Mascon concluded there was no hope of a cure, caused the youth with all confidence to make a vow to St. Joseph. The father said Mass in honor of the same saint, to procure his powerful intercession, and advised the youth to confess and communicate. This being done, he caused the name of Jesus to be written and brought to the sick person, who swallowed down the paper, it having touched the heavenly balm of St. Joseph before spoken of. They rubbed, also, the inflammation with a piece of the same paper. The same day the fever left him, his appetite returned, the swelling wasted by degrees, and his strength returned after such a manner that within three or four days he found himself able to perform a journey of seven leagues on horseback; and this happened not only to these persons I have named, but several others at Lyons, Trevaux, and Loudon, were cured of very desperate fevers by these means.

Sister Margaret Rigaud, a professed religious, of the Monastery of St. Elizabeth at Lyons, fell from a floor one story high. The fall caused such a bruise in her head as made the blood gush out of her ears, and deprived her of her senses. They used all remedies, but nothing could ease her head, which was so much bruised that for several months together she was not able so much as to lean or rest it even upon the softest pillow. Her mind was in no less pain, being very much disquieted, caused by the weakness of her brain, and, the evil very much increasing, a consultation of doctors and surgeons was called, who all concluded that her head should be opened by being trepanned, and unless this remedy were used, she would soon be deprived of life, or of her senses. At the patient's request, who extremely apprehended this violent operation, its execution was deferred, and in the meantime the superior of the monastery, by God's inspiration, took a resolution to apply another remedy,

which had its effect. She ordered that a communion, for nine days together, should be offered for the recovery of this religious, in honor of St. Joseph, thereby to obtain his intercession. The distemper, notwithstanding, continued very violent, and caused great and sharp pain to the patient during eight days, and, the ninth day being begun without an appearance of health, some of the religious proposed that the sick person should make a vow to St. Antoline, who was wont, by her intercession, to cure such kinds of distempers. Another religious, hearing this and being unwilling that any but St. Joseph should have the honor of this cure, addressed herself to him with a great deal of fervor, begging of him that he would take to himself the honor of this cure, whose honor was now at stake, she being first recommended to him, and that he would not permit another to deprive him of it, especially since he had full power to effect it; and, last of all, she conjures him by those eminent prerogatives of his being the reputed father of Jesus, and spouse of Mary, to assist the sick person, promising, if he did so, that in thanksgiving she would perform nine mortifications, and say nine times his prayer in his honor. While she offered these devotions in behalf of her sick sister on the ninth day, she was suddenly cured, and so perfectly that she could not contain herself, but ran about the house, crying out, "A miracle! a miracle! I am quite recovered—I am perfectly well!" And so she was indeed; for she not only received health of body, but of soul, enjoying ever after a continual peace of mind, a love of devotion and regular observances; whereas, before, it was a mortification to her to be at the choir, and plain song was insupportable to her. Now she is the most punctual and zealous observer of this duty, and takes a most particular satisfaction therein, and in exactly following the community in all other regular observances; having received so great light from St. Joseph as to see and value perfection and whatever tends to it even before her corporal health or any other satisfaction whatsoever, and therefore honors him as her chief patron; since, with the health of her body, he bestowed such interior blessings and benefits to her soul.

In the same monastery, about eight years ago (when this was originally written), a religious, newly professed, had so violent a headache, that she could take no rest, and prayer became even impossible to her to perform. Hereupon her superior ordered her to communicate nine Tuesdays in succession in honor of St. Joseph, to obtain his intercession for her delivery from this violent distemper. Upon the fourth Tuesday, which that year happened to be the feast of St. Joseph, during the sermon in his honor, in which his praises were set forth, her torments were so redoubled that she was scarcely able to hold up her head, and even knew not where



The Way of the Good.

The Way of the Bad.

THE CHILD JESUS AND ST. JOSEPH.

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she was, or what she did. But this pain, great as it was, was not able to make her neglect her duty and devotion of hearing out the sermon, nor prevent her afterward from staying in the church to pray with the rest of the religious, although she could say or think of nothing but these words, "O St. Joseph!" which she repeated with incredible joy of heart, rejoicing that he was such a saint; which joy was attended with that of her being delivered from her headache, and that so entirely that never since has she felt the least pain in her head.

The superior of the Congregation of the Word Incarnate was afflicted for ten years together with sore eyes, so that she could not read, and a continual defluction fell upon them that so darkened her sight that the oculists thought she would never perfectly recover it; she no sooner had made a vow to St. Joseph to say his office for a year together than she was immediately delivered from this dimness of sight.

How successful St. Joseph is also in curing his clients, securing them even from the greatest of all distempers, the plague, we may gather from his defending the city of Avenson from being utterly destroyed by it about ten years since, upon account of a solemn vow made to him of forever celebrating his feast; and this example caused several at Lyons to have recourse to him by their prayers, and receive succor from him also in time of the plague; of whom I shall relate two or three of the most remarkable examples.

Mr. Augery, an advocate in the parliament of Dauphine, being at Lyons, and understanding, on July 15, 1638, that Theodore Augery, his son, seven years of age, was seized by the plague, a hard swelling appearing under his right arm, accompanied with a violent fever—evident signs which, the following day, very much increased, with the bubo or swelling—he made a vow to God, that if St. Joseph, by his intercession, would procure his son's recovery, and preserve his family from the plague, he would for nine days together hear Mass in his church in his honor, and offer tapers and wax candles at his altar, with a votive picture, as a lasting memory of this favor. In the meantime, the sick youth, being visited by the plague surgeons, who gave him up for dead, was taken out of the house, and carried to St. Laurence, the pest-house, for fear of infecting others. Here he found himself perfectly well, nor were any more of his family, nine in number, infected; whereupon he performed his vow, and hung up a picture at St. Joseph's altar, in which himself wife, and children were painted, on their knees, giving thanks to God for this favor, obtained by the intercession of St. Joseph, with an account of it written at the bottom of the picture, and signed by himself.

Father Melchior, of Faug, a religious of the Society of Jesus, being a month exposed to serve those who were in the quarantine or pest-house,

having taken the plague, and lying near death, all despairing of his recovery—after having been three days in his agony, a friend of his, of the same order, made a vow, and invited the sick man to do the like, in case he recovered, to offer nine masses in the Church of St. Joseph, in thanksgiving for his recovery. At the same hour that the vow was made, he recovered his speech, and found himself out of all danger.

Tevenet, a good old man of St. Laurence Dager, a village near Lyons, infected with the plague, asked the vicar of the place whether there were no means for his recovery, who answered him that there were none but by having recourse to St. Joseph, and by making a vow every year to keep his feast, and to confess and communicate upon it, and for nine days to say seven *paters* and *aves*, and conclude it with *Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*. The pious old man immediately made the vow, and at the same time found himself freed from the plague, wondering what was become of his *buboes* and swellings, which vanished on a sudden.

Martin de Bau, a little child, four years old, was struck with the plague while he was at play. All gave him up for lost; and his mother, being in very great desolation and affliction, was counseled to recommend him to St. Joseph, which she immediately did, in these words, "St. Joseph, to you I recommend my child." About two hours after, the child's father, perceiving some signs of death, called his wife, who, giving him up for dead, made a kind of pious complaint, saying, "Ah, St. Joseph!" She came to the child, and found the evil diminished, who a little after called to his mother for some meat, recovered his wonted countenance, rose from his bed, and cried out, "I am well—St. Joseph has cured me." The morning following, there was not the least sign of any complaint, and he felt no more weakness than if he had never been sick. His parents carried him to the Church of St. Joseph to give thanks, where they hung up a votive picture, to testify not only the child's, but the father's delivery from the plague; who afterward was visited and delivered also by St. Joseph's intercession, from the same evil, by the application to the *bubo* or swelling of some cotton, that had touched the ointment at London, whereby St. Joseph miraculously cured one of the religious of that place, as I mentioned before.

Bennet Gontelle, a gardener, living in a garden that joins St. Joseph's church, every day lost one of his family, consisting of seventeen; out of which one daily fell sick, and was led to the pest-house, where his wife and children were already dead of it, and he and one servant only left in the house, who daily expected to follow the rest. I visited him in this sad affliction, and, being his next neighbor, counseled him to make a vow to St. Joseph, which he did, and I joined with him in it: promising to offer several masses and communions in his honor, if by his intercession

he would obtain his and his servant's preservation from the plague. God heard his prayers, and preserved them both from the infection.

To conclude the catalogue of those whom St. Joseph assisted in a very extraordinary manner, who were either cured when infected or preserved from the infection, I must also add the following : Those who are appointed masters of health in the city of Lyons, to take care of the infected; and prevent the increase of the infection, having, after a particular manner, recommended themselves to St. Joseph, were all preserved from it, notwithstanding that, in the discharge of their employment, they were daily exposed to the danger of the infection ; wherefore they all came in a body to St. Joseph's church, in the year 1638, to confess and communicate, and to offer wax candles at St. Joseph's altar, to express their gratitude to him for the signal favor which he had obtained for them and the whole town.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ASSISTANCE WHICH GOD GIVES ON ALL OCCASIONS BY ST. JOSEPH'S INTERCESSION.

WHOSOEVER desires to experience the effects of St. Joseph's intercession will find him a true father, for he forsakes none in their necessities, but assists those who have recourse to him in all their exigencies, especially if what they desire conduce to God's honor and glory. Thus he assisted St. Teresa in the foundation of the greater part of her monasteries; as is set down at large in the history of her order. And I know a person who was in great pain about the success of an affair of importance; whereupon he caused Mass to be said in honor of St. Joseph, begged his intercession, and it succeeded as well as he could have wished.

St. Joseph has concern not only for spiritual, but even temporal affairs, and by his intercession assists those who beg his help therein: as we may see by the example St. Teresa relates of herself, who was in great pain about some debts she had contracted in building the Monastery of Avila; not knowing what course to take for the payment of the workmen. In this perplexity St. Joseph appeared to her, bade her confidently to agree with the workmen and engage for all necessaries for the building, promising she should not want money to defray the expenses; and in effect she found he performed his promise, she receiving money from persons from whom she least expected so great charities, both to her own and other persons' astonishment.

The Carthusians also experienced, in the last age, how powerful his intercession is with Almighty God; for, fearing so great a desolation as the failing of their order would have been for the want of subjects, none presenting themselves to undertake that sort of life, a general chapter was held at their great chapter-house at Grenoble, to the end they might obtain St. Joseph's powerful intercession, in what was of the greatest concern for the support of their order. They made a decree in general chapter, by which they chose him for the patron and advocate of their order, and they ordained that his feast should for the future not only be kept as of obligation throughout their whole order, but with very great solemnity; which singular devotion of theirs was so favored and accepted of by St. Joseph, and his intercession was so efficacious in the court of heaven,

that in all parts of the world where they are established, they have never since wanted proper subjects to increase their holy order : and if any particular house at any time wants subjects, let them but address themselves to him, and they find his powerful assistance ; as their house at Lyons did some years ago, where, by making a vow that the priests should every day make commemoration of him in their Mass, they have never since wanted fit subjects to increase their number.

But St. Joseph not only brings subjects to religion, but even whole nations to the Catholic Church ; and this was the reason that our fathers gave the name of Joseph to the first Tarquois whom they baptized. New France also owns him for its patron, and for the propagation of the Catholic faith in the southern parts of America ; and one of the chief missions in those parts is called "The mission of St. Joseph : " and in the year 1626 two hundred families were baptized, and their example moved six neighboring townships to unite themselves to the true faith, that they might also become partakers of those spiritual and temporal blessings which St. Joseph visibly obtained for those happy converts.

St. Joseph also favors marriage, and unites the hearts of married persons, procuring them a true and constant conjugal affection ; as appears in the example of a very rich merchant of Lyons, who had a very great inclination to marry a young woman of quality : but she rejected all propositions of the kind. Whereupon he addressed himself to St. Joseph, vowing the giving an alms of a hundred crowns in his honor, if he would move her to hearken to his proposal of marriage. The vow is no sooner made than he gains her consent, and the marriage is made up : and they lived a most happy couple in a constant peace and union of affection, which is one of the greatest blessings in this world.

He assists chaste persons also, and preserves them from all attempts the enemy makes to destroy in them the admirable virtue of chastity ; as appears in an example of a pious virgin, who being attacked in this point, her confessor advised her to have recourse to St. Joseph ; and caused her to wear about her a paper that had touched the miraculous ointment at Loudon, whereby she presently found help and comfort ; as another also did, who recommended herself to the same saint, promising to wear his image for nine days together. I had this relation from the person herself who received this benefit by St. Joseph's intercession.

St. Joseph also hears and helps persons pregnant, as appears by a votive picture in the church of St. Joseph at Lyons, on the side of his altar. Her child being dead for some days within her, she could not be delivered ; yet she no sooner begged his assistance than she was delivered of it half putrefied, with safety also of her life, which all despaired of. The like favor happened to a woman at Trevaux, who by a very hard

labor for three days together, was brought to the last extremity. In these straits, she thought of recommending herself to St. Joseph, and purposed to confess and communicate in his honor, and to swallow a paper that had touched the miraculous ointment of Loudon; which she had no sooner done than she was happily delivered.

He favors also married persons, by giving them children, one of the chief blessings of marriage; as a votive picture in St. Joseph's church testifies, of one who wanted this blessing, who had no sooner begged his intercession than within a year she obtained it. But to save setting down many other examples of St. Joseph's assistance, the testimony of St. Teresa, and of many others of his clients, whom I have heard avouch the same truth, is, that he refuses nothing that is asked of him, but provides a remedy in all necessities; which is a sufficient motive to have recourse to him, with all assurance of our obtaining our just petitions.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN EXHORTATION TO HAVE RECOURSE TO ST. JOSEPH, AND TO CONFIDE IN HIS POWERFUL PROTECTION.



We ought to believe that the Mother of God has a knowledge from her Son of what is good for our salvation ; wherefore, if we desire her to advise us what is best to secure our salvation, we cannot doubt but she will say, “ Be devout to St. Joseph ; love my dear spouse, St. Joseph.”

To prove this assertion, I will relate what Father Balthazar Alvarez, a great client of hers, and confessor to St. Teresa, affirms ; who being one day sick at Valladolid of a burning fever, one of the religious that helped him showed him an image of our blessed Lady and St. Joseph, and put him in mind of recommending himself to the spouse of the blessed Virgin. “ You have reason,” says he, “ for the Mother of God has expressly commanded me to do so ;” and, as he afterward owned, it was in the chapel of Loretto that she gave him this command. She gave the same advice also to St. Teresa, who was Father Balthazar’s penitent ; which caused her to have so great a devotion to St. Joseph, and such a confidence in him, that she styled him her father ; and those that follow our blessed Lady’s advice in this regard may expect a particular mark of her kindness and encouragement upon this account, as she showed to St. Teresa.

It happened that at Avila, upon the feast of the Assumption, while St. Teresa was carrying on the foundation of that monastery under the name of St. Joseph, as she was at her prayers she saw our blessed Lady upon one side and St. Joseph on the other, showing her extraordinary expressions of kindness ; and, among others, that which gave her an incredible consolation was the familiar treatment our blessed Lady used toward her ; taking her by the hand, and giving her thanks for her affection to her dear spouse, and for her particular devotion to him. After these thanks, she promised her all sorts of assistance in her pious design ; and in confirmation of her affection, she made her a present of a collar or chain of gold, with a cross hung at it, set with precious stones, so resplendent that she never beheld the like. This made St. Teresa use her utmost endeavors to induce and persuade all to a devotion to her glorious patron ; and without doubt, were we so happy as to converse with the saints now in heaven, they would join with her in persuading us to so

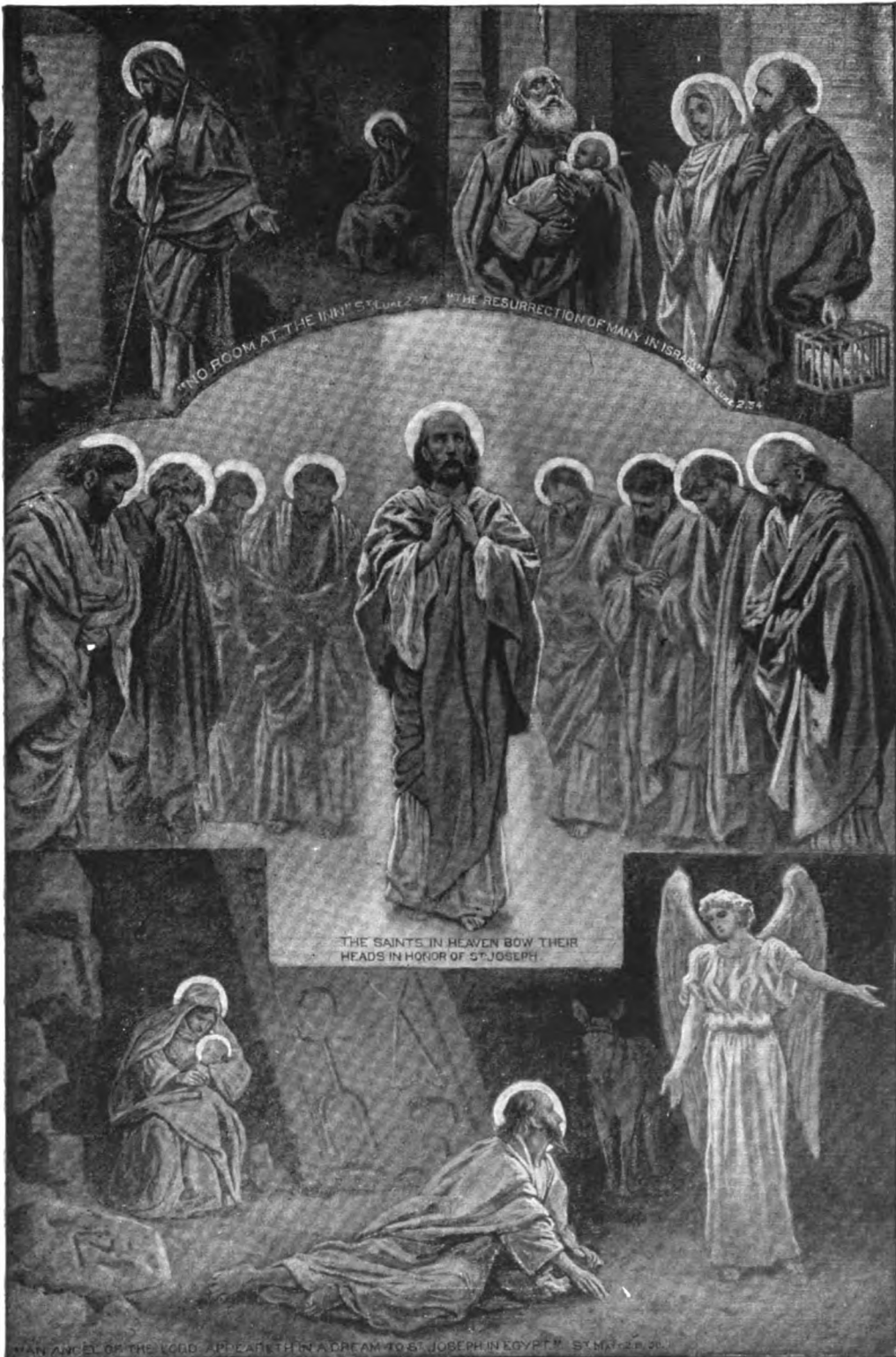
pious and profitable a work by their own example ; for we read in St. Gertrude's life, that upon the vigil of the annunciation of our blessed Lady, she perceived all the saints in heaven bow their heads in honor of St. Joseph, while his name was recited in the choir, they looking upon one another with signs of joy and congratulation to see St. Joseph honored upon earth as they honor him in heaven.

Since, therefore, the Queen of saints and angels, and all the saints and angels themselves, take such a satisfaction in seeing St. Joseph honored, can we think it proceeds from any other reason than because they see that this honor done to St. Joseph is highly pleasing to God and most profitable to man ? Wherefore, let us upon this account renew our pious resolutions of honoring him above all, next to Jesus and Mary. Let us resolve to honor him all the days of our lives, especially upon his feast days, since there is none more beloved, nor more worthy of our love, next to Jesus and Mary ; who obliges his lovers by all sorts of favors, wins their devotions by miracles, especially in matters of life and death, in body and soul, as well for this life as the next ; and who most easily and favorably grants, through Christ, whatever is asked, and procures us a free access to Jesus and Mary.

Wherefore, it was a profitable invention of the devout Henry, canon of Chartres, to have recourse to St. Joseph ; since, as the learned Gerson remarks, having him on his side, he was sure also of the protection of Jesus and Mary, as appears by the following examples.

St. Teresa, making a voyage with some of her religious to found Veas, was gone out of her right way, and so engaged with her company among the rocks which hung over the brow of a precipice, that the wagoner could not either go backward or forward. Presently she went to her wonted refuge, St. Joseph, ordering her companions to join with her in begging the protection of her dear father. They had no sooner done so than they saw an old man, who cried to them with a loud voice, "Stand, for you will be all lost if you go on !" Wherefore they asked of him, "What way shall we go on ?" "That way," replied he, which seemed impossible for a wagon to go to ; but on a sudden they found themselves miraculously put into it : at which time they endeavored to find out the old man to thank him, but in vain, as St. Teresa foretold ; who assured them it was her good father, St. Joseph, who had freed them from the great danger they were in.

It was for this reason that the exorcist of Sister Jane of the Angels, prioress of the Ursulines at Loudon, who knew his goodness and power, chose him for her protector in this work ; for the devils complained of St. Joseph, by whose means they were hindered from molesting the religious at their devotions,



ST. JOSEPH THE BELOVED.

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And that St. Joseph even helps without being asked, or expecting our prayers, the following passage, that happened at Lyons in the month of September, 1638, evidently proves, which I had from the person's own mouth, and is as follows :

Mr. Peter Eviavlin, a rich merchant, coming, upon the 8th of September, our blessed Lady's Nativity, with a friend of his, to the Church of St. Joseph, after some discourse with his friend, who was a client of St. Joseph, about several graces and favors that St. Joseph bestowed upon his clients, and of his great merits, conceived a great desire to take him for his advocate, and resolved to frequent his church, and to hear Mass in it the Thursday and Friday following. The next Sunday, within the octave upon which he put himself under St. Joseph's protection, as he walked in the fields for his amusement, he met two men, unknown to him, one of whom shot at him with a blunderbuss charged with thirty hailshot. All entered his body, without giving him any mortal wound: two or three stayed in his belly, and one of them was beaten flat upon his forehead. His wife and some passengers, coming to his assistance, found him upon the ground, and thought him dead; but being taken up, the wounded man, seeing himself all bloody, recommended himself to St. Joseph, to whom his wife also made a vow, which succeeded so well that her husband recovered his hurts within five days, and came to give thanks at St. Joseph's church, being perfectly well, and there offered a picture of his miraculous escape as a token of his gratitude.

Give me leave, now, to end this treatise by joining my petition with that of St. Teresa, and beseeching you, if you will not believe me, yet for the love of God, that you will make trial how advantageous the devotion to this great saint is, and how prosperous you will find it by experience; for I have not said all I might, there being greater advantages in loving and being devout to St. Joseph than the most persuasive panegyrist is able to express. But believe me who will, and let those that will, imitate me also: for my part, I am resolved to love St. Joseph for time and eternity—not with a languishing but a flaming love—thereby to redeem lost time; nor will I prefer any object under God, before him: for, next after Jesus and Mary, Joseph shall have place in my affections, in which I will persevere till my last breath, which shall be employed in pronouncing these sacred names: “Jesus, Mary, Joseph. Live Jesus, Mary, Joseph.” Amen.

PORTRAIT OF THE GREAT SAINT JOSEPH.

THE bitter grief and poignant anguish of heart our sins and infidelities have caused the amiable and blessed Virgin, our good Mother, ought to urge us to seek every sort of pious invention capable of soothing her sorrow and increasing her joy. An excellent means would be to cherish a tender and filial devotion to her worthy spouse, St. Joseph; for it affords singular pleasure to the ever-glorious Virgin to see him honored and invoked by her affectionate children. If, then, you desire to delight the virginal heart of Mary, practise the following exercises in honor of this great patriarch, who merited to receive from the Holy Ghost the glorious title of father of Jesus, and spouse of His blessed Mother.

First, enter into a strong and fixed resolution to imitate, as far as you are able, all his virtues, especially his ardent love of Jesus and Mary, his constant fidelity, his abject poverty, his angelic purity, his love of silence, his divine patience, his blind obedience, and his profound humility.

Second, celebrate every year, with sincere and cordial devotion, his great feast on the 19th of March, as well as that which the Church celebrates on the 23d of January, in honor of his immaculate marriage with the ever Virgin, that established between this chosen pair the closest union and most cordial sympathy.

Third, devote the month of March, which has been called the month of Joseph, in a particular manner to his service, since this month has been signalized by many events relating to Joseph—in this month he received into his society the Saviour of the world; in this month Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, and visited Joseph in limbo; in this month Joseph also died; this month is likewise remarkable for the finding of Jesus in the temple, and several other sacred events.

Fourth, take a day every week, which may be Wednesday, that is generally dedicated to Joseph, to recite devoutly his litanies, which contain the principal actions of his life and the most illustrious prerogatives with which heaven has honored him, and which are so many and so numerous that to avoid too long a litany they may be divided into two, and said alternately.

Fifth, every day address him after the manner expressed in the salutation, which comprises those admirable qualities that hold him in relation with the most holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, as also with the glorious Virgin and all the faithful. It likewise comprises the principal virtues that form his crown and brightest ornament.

Sixth, you may also daily, or according to your devotion, commemorate his seven dolours and joys in this life, by reciting seven "*Paters*" and seven "*Aves*" for that intention, which is a practice most pleasing to him, and was taught by himself to two holy men, and confirmed by a miracle. (See Janu's History of St. Joseph.) Should your occupations not allow you to do this, say seven "*Aves*," or at least these sacred words, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph," seven times, more in your heart than with your lips, in memory of his seven dolours, and as often in honor of his seven joys.

The seven Sorrows of St. Joseph.

First, at finding that his honored Lady and amiable spouse had conceived, and at the idea of being obliged by the law to forsake her. (St. Matt. i. 18, 19.)

Second, at not being able to find lodging in the city of Bethlehem for the King and Queen of heaven, and at seeing Jesus lying shivering on a little straw in a manger, between two animals—His only shelter from the cold, there being no room for Him in the inn. (St. Luke ii. 7.)

Third, at seeing the divine infant suffer and shed so much of His precious blood in the painful ceremony of His circumcision, when he was but eight days old. (St. Luke ii. 21.)

Fourth, at hearing, on the day of the purification, the prophecy of holy Simeon, that the child should be an object of contradiction and persecution, and that a sword of sorrow should pierce Mary's heart. (St. Luke ii. 34, 35.)

Fifth, his flight into Egypt with the child and His Mother, in the darkness of the night, and in the depth of winter, to escape the persecution raised by Herod against the adorable infant. (St. Matt. ii. 13.)

Sixth, on his return from Egypt, hearing that Archelaus, more cruel still, reigned in Judea in the room of Herod his father, he was afraid to go thither, and being warned in sleep retired into Galilee. (St. Matt. ii. 22.)

Seventh, in the celebrated pilgrimage to Jerusalem, not finding the child Jesus, his only solace, among his acquaintance, he sought Him three days, sorrowing for His loss. (St. Luke i. 45, 46, 48.)

The seven Joys of St. Joseph.

First, the embassy of the angel sent from heaven to console him in

these words: "Joseph, Son of David, fear not to take Mary thy wife, for what is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (St. Matt. i. 20.)

Second, the tidings of great joy brought by an angel to the shepherds, that a Saviour was born in the city of David, while a multitude of the heavenly army was praising God, and saying, "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." (St. Luke ii. 10, 13, 14.)

Third, giving the child the name of Jesus, "which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." (St. Luke ii. 21.)

Fourth, when he saw the wise men from the east come to pay their homage to the new-born King, "and falling down they adored Him, and opening their treasures they offered Him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh." (St. Matt. ii. 1, 2, 11.)

Fifth, when he heard in the temple from the lips of holy Simeon, that the child was to be "the resurrection of many in Israel." (St. Luke ii. 34.)

Sixth, in the land of Egypt, when he saw the idols fallen and broken before the infant God, and heard from the angel that "they were dead that sought the life of the child, and that he might return with safety into the land of Israel." (St. Matt. ii. 20.)

Seventh, the finding of Christ in the temple, disputing in the midst of the doctors, after sorrowing for Him three days. (St. Luke ii. 46.)

PORTRAITURE OF THE VIRTUES OF THE
ILLUSTRIOUS AND ADMIRABLE SAINT JOSEPH,
SPOUSE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD.

WHAT could be said more to his praise than to be called in the gospel, as often as four times, the father of Jesus, and that by the Holy Ghost Himself? Surely he must have possessed the virtues of a father supereminently to justify this appellation—the tenderness and love of a father, which would seem to include all other virtues, and to constitute their form and perfection; as, according to St. Augustine, “God is honored only by love.” “*Ama et fac quod vis*” (Guided by love, you may act as you please).

Hence we see him figure on the theatre of divine love the second of mortals and the first of men, as, after the Mother of God, he held the first place among the ardent lovers of Jesus; and as God the Father confided to his care His divine Son, the object of His complacency, it is more than probable that the Holy Ghost, too, whose gifts were lavished on him, gave him a clear knowledge of the mystery of the incarnation, either through the ministry of His angels, or by abundant lights communicated immediately to himself. “*Spiritus ubi vult Spirat. Spiritus est, qui testificatur quoniam Christus est veritas*” (The Spirit breathes where He willeth. The Spirit manifesteth that Christ is the truth).

This interior illustration, together with the familiar intercourse and fondness cemented between them, seeing Him, hearing Him, speaking with Him, carrying Him in his arms, embracing Him, and receiving from Him in return a thousand caresses, must have enkindled in a soul so well disposed a flame of light and love. These were so many arrows that pierced his amorous heart, till, languishing with love, and overpowered with so many favors, he gave up the ghost, a victim of the most heavenly ardor, assisted by his Creator and Redeemer, who received his last breath—his last effort of love. Whence we may conclude with the learned Suarez, that, having excelled in charity here on earth, he excels in glory in heaven. “*Qui seminat in benedictionibus de benedictionibus et metet*” (He who sows the seeds of eminent virtue, will reap the fruits of glory in proportion).

After Jesus, His blessed Mother was always the object of Joseph's tenderest affection. If any one ever excelled in devotion to the Queen of heaven, it was Joseph—he was the person that was nearest allied to her, most like her, and most attached to her—he of all mortals paid the first homage, the tenderest devotion that ever was or ever shall be paid to the incomparable Virgin. Who ever weighed more profoundly the sense and contents of the angelical salutation, and the depth of its mystery? “*Conferens in corde suo salutationem, 'Ave gratia plena'*” (Pondering in his heart the words of the angel, “Hail, full of grace”).

In the noble and generous heart of the great St. Joseph, as in the nursery and hotbed of every virtue, first sprang up the seeds and first fruits of devotion to Mary—from this source it was transplanted into the hearts of the faithful and of religious devoted to Mary; and in virtue of his merits and powerful protection has it been so rich in graces and conversions in the Church of God; for to this origin must be referred, as several saints attest of themselves, whatever fruits it has brought forth or is to bring forth to the end of time. “*Vulnerasti cor meum, soror mea, sponsa, ut revelentur ex multis cordibus cogitationes*” (Thou hast wounded my heart, my sister, my spouse, that pious thoughts may be manifested from many hearts).

From Joseph's devotion to Mary resulted their angelic union and holy marriage, which the Church honors by a special feast on the 23d of January. On this day was laid the foundation of the first and most perfect community that ever adorned or ever shall adorn the Church of God—the pattern and model of all other communities, where God would be served as He deserves. So heavenly a community was it, that divine Wisdom, who was fully aware of the merits of its members, was induced, by the splendor of their virtues, to leave the bosom of His Father, and join them on the 25th of March. Of this community Joseph was constituted superior by God Himself, without any will of his own. “*Neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo—Joseph, noli accipere Mariam conjugem tuam*” (Not of the will of man, but of God—Joseph, be not unwilling to take Mary your spouse).

Joseph, at the head of this admirable society and wonderful alliance between him, the Queen of heaven, and the Son of God, entirely unconscious of his own dignity, fixed his eyes and settled his attention on those he was placed over, devoted and dedicated himself in a special manner to the singular honor and service of each of its members, looked on them as his prototype, which he endeavored to copy, strove with the abundant graces of state he received to form in him as perfect an image as he could of the life they led, and of the virtues they practised; so that this trinity of the earth, the members of this community, though three in persons,

were like the Trinity of heaven, but one in affection—one breath seemed to animate them, one spirit to guide them in all their actions; they had the same views, and thought the same in all things, and in the union of the same love. "*Erat illis cor unum et anima una—erant illis omnia communia*" (They had one heart and one soul—they had all things in common).

Jesus, in return for the faithful discharge of so precious a stewardship, and for the affection, care, and solicitude bestowed by Him on the members of this amiable community, loved, honored, and obeyed Joseph. He was subject to them, says the evangelist; and Gerson adds that as this submission shows the humility of Jesus, so does it manifest Joseph's incomparable dignity, whose constant fidelity in the fulfillment of his charge, and his unceasing application to study and supply the wants and necessities of his dear community, were a new source of grace and spiritual delight to this good and faithful servant, whom his Master always found watching. Blessed is the servant whom his Lord finds so doing: He will place him over all things He possesseth. "*Quis, putas, est fidelis dispensator et prudens quem constituit Dominus supra familiam suam?*" (Who, think you, is the faithful and prudent steward, whom his lord placeth over his family?) "*Esto fidelis usque ad mortem et dabo tibi coronam vitæ*" (Be faithful to the end, and I will give thee a crown of life).

By conversing with the Man-God and witnessing His actions, and imbibing His divine Spirit, Joseph inherited the naked and holy poverty of the Lord of the earth, and of the plenitude thereof, who said of Himself, that He "was poor and toiling from His youth, who had not where to be born or to recline His head, but embraced poverty to enrich us and to set us the example. Though descended of the kings of Juda, and of the royal race of David, the poor servant of God despised their earthly possessions, their dignities and grandeurs, and showed true magnanimity of soul in preferring a treasure in heaven, trusting to the hand above that feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field with more than the splendor of Solomon.

"*Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum cælorum—Ve divitibus!*" (Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven—Woe to the rich!)

The sacred silence of Jesus in His mother's womb, during His divine infancy, for eighteen years of his more advanced life, and afterward in false accusations, found a zealous admirer and perfect imitator in St. Joseph, of whom we do not discover one saying recorded in the entire New Testament: for such was his love of this heaven-born virtue, the daughter of prudence, that he obtained of the Holy Ghost, who directed

the hands of the sacred penmen, not to allow a single word of his to be handed down to posterity.

Mary speaks and addresses Jesus, while her lord and master is silent. How intimately was he penetrated with the fear of sinning in too much speaking? And how he cherished a virtue that contributed to unite him to eternal Wisdom! "*Jesus autem tacebat*" (Jesus was silent). "*Bonum est prestolari cum silentio salutare Dei*" (It is good to await in silence God's salvation). "*Sedebit solitarius et tacebit, quia levavit supra se*" (The recluse shall sit down and be silent, because he rises above himself).

But who will be able to conceive the interior purity of him who was honored as a father by the author of all purity, "*Honorifico patrem meum,*" and whose more than angelic marriage is honored on the 23d of January, besides his feast that is celebrated on the 19th of March? Surely he must be admirably pure of heart to deserve to press to his bosom the immaculate Lamb of God, and to obtain the reward of his purity, in seeing Him face to face here below. How amiable and desirable above all things the divine virtue that happily disposes the soul to a contemplative life, and is the principal means, as St. Thomas teaches, of rendering it capable of God's illustrations and intimate communications, of His friendly conversation and blessed vision amid the darkness of this valley of tears. "*Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt—cor mundum crea in me Deus*" (Blessed are the poor of heart, for they shall see God—create in me, O God, a clean heart).

Christ, Joseph's model in every virtue, wished to satiate Himself with the pleasure of suffering—the same may be said of His perfect copy: after Mary, who ever felt more joy from afflictions than Joseph, the spouse of the Queen of Martyrs, under his various dolors? His holy life, from beginning to end, was a continual exercise of patience, under the four great sorts of sufferings: poverty, and the wants of life—exterior pains that afflict the body—interior ones that afflict the spirit—and humiliations and affronts. In these he had an ample field for the exercise of his virtue, of which he left a heroic example to after ages. Blessed is the man that endureth tribulation, for he shall receive the crown of life. "*Communicantis Christi passionibus gaudete, si exprobramini in nomine Christi beati eritis, quoniam quod est honoris, et gloria et virtutis Dei, et qui est ejus spiritus super vos requiescit*" (Rejoice when you participate in the sufferings of Christ, and account yourselves happy if you receive reproaches for His sake; for all real honor and true glory, and the virtue of God, and the plenitude of His spirit shall repose upon you).

The obedient man has victories at his command. Joseph's submission to the divine will gave him a mastery over God Himself: "He was His governor in the land of Egypt," to whose unerring will he so perfectly

united his as to make of them but one. This divine will he acknowledges, and promptly bows to, whether manifested by the hand of Providence directing the various events of life, or by the ministry of an angel, without examining the why or the reason, and by this cordial and blind obedience he captivated the homage of Him before whom the pillars of heaven tremble. An interior ray of divine light discovered to him the beauty of the order established by the All-wise, and gave him a secret delight in being able to contribute to the execution of it. St. Catherine of Genoa says, "The more one conforms to the divine will, the more he leaves his own imperfection, and approaches that of God."

"*Exurgens, Joseph fecit sicut precepit ei angelus—non sicut ego volo sed sicut tu*" (Joseph, rising, did as the angel ordered him—not my will but thine be done).

"God resists the proud, whereas he gives his grace to the humble." As true humility is the surest sign of perfect sanctity, so it was the base and guardian of Joseph's other virtues: this hidden treasure was quite unknown to him; he was entirely unconscious of it, and therefore it took the deeper root in his soul. In him it was an ardent love that inclined him to dissolve into nothing before God, and to appear contemptible to man: his humility made him practise silence and retirement; it reminded him of his nothingness, in which he delighted, as it contributed to increase God's glory, "who is honored by the humble."

"*Quanto magnus es humilia te in omnibus, et coram Deo invenies gratiam. Discite a me quia mitis sum et humilio corde*" (The greater thou art, humble thyself the more in all things, and thou shalt find favor with God. Learn of me to be meek and humble of heart).

As the first fruit of his humility, he strenuously endeavored to conceal himself and what he was from the world, and to lead that hidden life of which he is the illustrious patron and accomplished model. But of this divine life, so little known to immortalized souls, who can have a just idea? for all the glory and beauty of the king's daughter, that is, the true Christian, is within. The most honored of men was the most unknown and despised: the governor and guardian of the King of heaven spends his precious life in the obscurity of a carpenter's shop, and, while his consummate virtues ravish the heart of God, he has neither will nor wish to manifest them to the world. Joseph might have said and done wonders, but he preferred the great maxim of saying little. Moses says he found a greater difficulty than ever in speaking after conversing with God: a soul interiorly conversant with Him has an aversion to any exterior display; she is satisfied with the knowledge God has of her.

"The kingdom of God is not in manifestation, it is within you."
"Your life is hidden with Christ in God."

But who can tell the immense weight of his glory and his prerogatives in heaven? for to enumerate all his virtues would be endless; it is the opinion of the pious and learned Suarez that he is exalted above the apostles and John the Baptist, since he surpassed them in dignity, as the dignity of father, of governor, and of prime minister of Jesus is greater than that of herald and precursor. Others say that in a well-suited marriage, as Joseph's must have been, an equality is necessary; and so they conclude that he must approach nearest to the sanctity of Mary. Besides, as Jesus and she, by a single visit and salutation, sanctified the Baptist, how much more of their divine spirit must they not have infused into Joseph by their constant presence and conversation. Further, as all his thoughts, words, and actions were referred to the Word incarnate, they thence became Godlike and divine: what wonder, then, that St. Teresa should have such tender devotion to this favorite of heaven, and should so strongly recommend it to others as the best means of securing God's friendship? assuring them that it was through his mediation she had received the choicest favors.



EIGHT MEDITATIONS

Upon some passages of the Life of St. Joseph, which may serve through the Octave of his Feast, or at other times.

MEDITATION I.—OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS BIRTH AND NAME OF ST. JOSEPH.

The Preparatory Prayer.—Beg humbly of God that your memory, understanding, and will, may be employed to His greater honor and glory, in this mental prayer.

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself at Nazareth, at the birth of St. Joseph, and reflect on the difference wherewith men and blessed spirits regarded this royal infant.

Second Prelude.—Beg light to see the vanity of the world, and grace to despise it.

Point 1.

Consider, That St. Joseph was lineally descended from the greatest kings of the tribe of Juda, and from the most illustrious of the ancient patriarchs; but that his true glory consisted in his humility and virtue. He was born for great ends, and designed by the Almighty to be the guardian of His divine Son, manifested to the world in human nature. We may truly say, "O glorious St. Joseph, you were born for great ends indeed: to be the legal guardian of the promised Messiah, spouse to the Mother of God, guardian of Jesus, and master of the sacred family; you appeared like the clear dawning of the day, ushering in the glorious sun of justice. I congratulate you for your early sanctification, and I give

thanks to my God for the prerogatives assigned you from all eternity. I take complacency that you are raised so high above all other saints, and it will be a satisfaction if so insignificant a creature as myself can in any way promote your honor."

Point 2.

Consider, This noble infant was born in a poor stable, without such distinguishing marks of grandeur as are never wanting at the birth of princes. Reflect, that as the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are the thoughts of God different from those of men. (Isaias lv.) Rebelling worms of the earth sit under the shade of triumphant laurels, although vicious as bloody Nero and savage Diocletian; while Job, the Idumean prince, is despised upon a dunghill, and Joseph, the next heir to the scepter of David, is not noticed. After this manner the Almighty treats His chosen favorites. The rich man, who was clothed in silks and purple, and feasted sumptuously every day (St. Luke xvi.), sitting under a stately canopy, and adored by his flattering parasites, was so intoxicated with pride that he doated on his own misery. In that mistaken flourishing state he was odious to his Creator, contemptible to the angels, and, notwithstanding his funeral pomp, the Son of God wrote his dreadful epitaph, "buried in hell"—while the poor man, fainting at his gate for want of the crumbs cast away, and consoled by dogs licking his ulcers, was waited on by angels to take him to his place among the patriarchs, prophets, and kings. Oh, the beauty and riches of holy poverty! Oh, the dangerous circumstances of those who receive more temporal favors than others, which will render their judgment more terrible for abused bounties! Lord, open my eyes to see and condemn the frothy pomp of the world. Give me a sound judgment to undervalue myself. Create a clean heart in me, removing that which has hitherto been hardened; by the intercession of St. Joseph correct my tepid and vain thoughts, that I may pity and pray for unfortunate mortals, who look forward to consider what it is to be buried in hell, from which there is no redemption or return.

Point 3.

Consider, The signification of the name "Joseph"—increase. No sooner did he attain the use of perfect reason than he was inflamed with the love of God. We find that St. Mary Magdalen of Passis made a vow of perpetual virginity at ten years of age; probably our angelical patriarch offered this inestimable treasure at an early age. He increased so fervently in all kinds of heroic virtues as to deserve afterward to be the foster-father of the Son of God. Most holy God, I blush, and am confounded in your presence, looking back on the sins of my depraved

youth. I have abused the first rays of reason in turning into the broad way of the world. My first lessons were to study my satisfaction, to be esteemed, and I ran mad after the erring multitude. As I increased in years, my crimes increased. Now, being sensible of all worldly folly, I penitently return. Receive me at the eleventh hour, you who had compassion on the good thief, when ready to expire upon the cross.

MEDITATION II.—OF THE HUMBLE CALLING OF ST. JOSEPH.

[*Preparatory prayer, as in the former meditation.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself at Nazareth, beholding St. Joseph in his youth exercising the laborious trade of a carpenter.

Second Prelude.—Beg of Almighty God to instruct you how, in your present state of life, you may attain true perfection.

Point 1.

Consider, How divine Providence ordered that St. Joseph, of royal extraction, should be brought up to the humble trade of a carpenter. 1. Not only for his bodily support, but that his contemptible calling might balance the future dignities that were to be conferred upon him, and to resemble the humble life of the Messias. 2. That he might decline idleness, so dangerous to his avowed charity. 3. That he might be a pattern to men living in the world, how they might be much in God's favor. 4. That by the labor of his hands he might be able to bestow the noblest charity in supporting the Son of God and His immaculate Mother. My soul, upon all occasions rejoice in divine appointments; and be assured that solid perfection is not confined to the solitary cells of Nitria. An unregarded artisan has surpassed the glory of all the rigid anchorites. Whoever serves his God more faithfully, and loves Him more ardently than the silent recluse, will have a more resplendent crown. Rejoice that your Creator encourages and entertains impartially all His servants, according to their merit, by coöperation with His grace. Congratulate St. Joseph for being so great a favorite of heaven. Take a strict account of yourself, how time is to be employed from morning till evening; reflect on what is amiss, and resolve upon amendment, by the intercession of St. Joseph.

Point 2.

Consider, That among other motives determining St. Joseph to exercise his trade was the love of humility and mortification. He had so clear a knowledge of God's greatness that he thought he could not descend too low. Oh, my soul, what different ideas have you of divine majesty and divine justice! You neither love your Creator as a father, nor fear your

Redeemer as a judge. St. Joseph had little to satisfy for; but he would offer acts of supererogation, while you stand upon terms with God, stopping at strict obligation; and, alas, too often transgress against indispensable commandments. Reflect, likewise, on the false notions of worldlings concerning mortification, who conclude that voluntary suffering appertains to such as have renounced the world and live in convents, as if the sinner deserved no greater punishment than the saint. Ponder how often you have heinously offended God; while, perhaps, the mortified religious never lost baptismal grace. Take up the cross in time; mortify yourself to satisfy for past trespasses. Be liberal to God if you expect extraordinary lights and impulses. Be careful, by a guard over the senses, to preserve a pure interior. Beg, by St. Joseph's intercession, that you may not displease God venially, even by the cast of an eye, or a loose jest.

Point 3.

Consider, How St. Joseph's painful life was accompanied with purity of intention, directing all his thoughts and words, and performing all his actions to the greater glory of God. This practice prepared him for the prerogatives distinguishing him from all other mortals. A right intention entitles to reward what in itself is indifferent, as being not commanded nor prohibited; it gives standard weight to the meanest of our actions; it advances a treasure to enrich us on taking leave of the world, and is a sort of continual prayer. Lament the irrevocable loss of many actions' not being meritorious from the want of pure intention. You never lacked vain and malicious intentions, obeying the suggestions of the infernal enemy. Desert him for the future; and whether you eat, drink, or sleep, make an offering, and tell Almighty God you comply with these necessities to please Him. Take St. Joseph for your master, to teach you how to join exterior employments with interior intention and attention.

MEDITATION III.—OF THE MARRIAGE OF ST. JOSEPH.

[*Preparatory prayer, as in the former meditations.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself to be in the temple of Jerusalem, when the High Priest gave to Joseph the immaculate Virgin Mary. How the patriarch espoused her by putting a ring upon her finger, with other ceremonies, according to the written law, in token that he made her partaker of all his goods, and took her under his protection.

Second Prelude.—Beg light to understand the mysteries of this matrimony, and grace to reap fruit from hence.

Point 1.

Consider, Those words of Solomon, "House and riches are given by parents: but a prudent wife is given by our Lord." (Prov. xix. 14.)

This seat of wisdom was so great a blessing to St. Joseph that he might truly say, "All good things came with her." (Wis. vii. 11.) She brought a plentiful portion for his improving in all manner of virtue. Christ assisted personally at the marriage of Cana at Galilee, and we may contemplate what a blessing was bestowed on the mutual contract between her who was to become Mother of God, and him whom the second person of the Trinity was to obey. This was the most honorable marriage (Heb. xiii.) since the creation: and with a copious infusion of divine grace, "God joined them." (St. Matt. xix. 16.) Ponder, likewise, how the merits of St. Joseph promoted him to this dignity, "For a good spouse is given a man for his good actions." (Eccles. xxvi. 3.) Study to please your Creator by purity of intention in choosing a state of life. Endeavor to be much in God's favor by good works. If you have faith to remove mountains, it avails nothing without charity. The devils believe and tremble; they make a profession that Christ was the son of God (St. Matt. viii.), yet remain damned spirits. Such as live not yet up to their belief have "the faith of devils, not of apostles." (St. Aug. *Serm.* 38, *de temp.*) Lament the sins and scandals of your past life. Resolve for the future, by the intercession of St. Joseph, that God and man shall see your good works, "and glorify your Father in heaven." Consider also, that if it be your choice to live in a married state, you ought to cherish your consort, to preserve peace and union, to avoid contention and misunderstandings. As you make one civil body, like the primitive Christians, "have one heart and soul." Love your spouse, as "Christ loved His Church" (Eph. v.), who for the love of it laid down His precious life. Beg blessings on your concerns by the intercession of St. Joseph.

Point -2.

Consider, God was pleased to acquaint the world, in these two noble persons, with the dignity of virginity and the value of vows. They had consecrated their virginity to their Creator, and one was chosen to be the mother, and the other legal father to the Son of God. Oh, inestimable treasure of chastity, that renders mortal men like to angels! Unspotted virgins sing canticles before the throne of God, peculiar to themselves. (Apoc. xiv. 3.) They attend the omnipotent Son of God wherever He goes. The religious of both sexes, who profess and observe this evangelical counsel, may be called sons and daughters of Mary and Joseph. O Virgin Mother! O virgin spouse! beg and obtain for me chaste dispositions and desires. Ask yourself whether edification and modesty appear in your conversation; if not, reform. Detest the company of such persons who, even indirectly, cast out words tending to levity. Fling aside, or, rather, burn books which recount the success of passionate love in creatures. Irregular

suggestions pass from the memory to the understanding, and so to the will: remove the fuel to prevent the fire. Lament wailings of what kind soever against this angelic virtue.

Point 3.

Consider, St. Joseph provided for the blessed Virgin, and took her into his protection. Do you also promote her honor in those under your charge? Suffer not anyone to speak with disrespect of her or her glorious spouse. Avoid the conversation of those who lessen devotion to these great souls. Have a filial confidence in their protection, and congratulate yourself for being so happy as to be devoted to them. Resolve to practice something to the honor of both. Do not be so grossly mistaken as to think eternal happiness must cost you nothing. Strip yourself of former fancies, and loathe what hitherto you have admired. Look up toward heaven; begin to overcome what you vainly feared. He is stronger who stretches out his hands to save you, than he who keeps you back in thralldom.

MEDITATION IV. — OF ST. JOSEPH'S JOURNEY WITH THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO MEET ST. ELIZABETH.

[*The preparatory prayer, as in the former meditations.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself accompanying the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph over craggy mountains, to a distant place far from Nazareth. Harken to their discourse in this winter's journey, and consider what was said in the house of Zachary; reflect on St. Joseph's perplexity at his return home.

Second Prelude.—Beg grace to be charitable to your neighbor, to shun detraction and rash judgment, and to be devoted to the blessed Virgin.

Point 1.

Consider, How, some months after St. Joseph's espousals, and a few days after the angel had declared to the blessed Virgin the mystery of the incarnation; and likewise that her cousin, St. Elizabeth, was six months pregnant, she humbly desired leave of St. Joseph to visit her; but he, out of his tender affection, would not suffer her to go without his personally taking care of her in that journey. Oh, admirable charity! Oh, profound humility! Seize all opportunities of comforting and succoring your neighbor. If you move in a higher sphere than others, reflect, that to whom much is given, much will be required of him. Condescend to inferiors. The Mother of God prevented, by a visit, the mother of the precursor. Who is the blessed Virgin, and who am I? My pride is inexcusable. Oh, my soul, study to be dead to all vanities, to be aware of diabolical illusions, suggesting such and such practices; become men of

honor. Lord, give me your holy love, and I am happy enough to pity wicked monarchs, even the most flourishing ones of the universe.

Point 2.

Consider, The many blessings that came by Mary. At her first salutation St. John was sanctified, and leaped for joy in his mother's womb. St. Elizabeth was replenished with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied; magnifying her sex, calling her "blessed among women," admiring her stupendous humility, that, being the Mother of the Lord, she should come to her. Oh, my tepid soul, learn to exult with joy at the receiving of thy Saviour in the holy Eucharist; make due preparations, by a serious and sincere confession; humbly beg that the intercession of Mary may be a means to procure thy sanctification, for by her God distributes His favors. Represent to her thy necessities, and beg an alms of her. Reflect, also, that if such wonders happened at the first hearing of the voice of the blessed Virgin, to what a degree of sanctity must St. Joseph have arrived, who conversed with her thirty years. If she obtains favors for notorious sinners, that by her prayers they return friendship to God, and are beatified with sanctifying grace, it is beyond our reach to comprehend what a fund of all virtues she procured for her dear St. Joseph. Contemplate how happy was the man "who had a good spouse" (Eccles. xxvi. 1), surpassing the excellency of the highest seraphim; and what a proficient he was in all perfection by her daily presence and heavenly discourse.

Point 3.

Consider, How the sublime virtue of St. Joseph was tried, when after his stay at Zachary's house, on his return home, he understood his immaculate spouse was pregnant. What sharp conflicts passed, then, between a pure conscience and chaste affections. He put the most favorable construction upon the occasion of his torturing affliction. He called to mind her unparalleled modesty and chastity, therefore would proceed cautiously, and not act with severity. He knew the long-promised Messiah was to be born of a virgin; and why might not she be that happy creature? Learn to excuse the seeming faults of others, and if an unbecoming action show several faces, look upon the least deformed; excuse the intention—conclude it accidental, and fear you would have done worse in the like circumstances. Beware of all rashness in censuring your neighbor. Ponder also upon St. Joseph's zeal for the law of God, which he infinitely preferred, as the chief object of his love, above whatsoever was under heaven. My soul, despise what is transitory, standing in competition with divine precept; prefer not again the villain Barabbas before thy God.

Yet the patriarch thought to dismiss her privately, that she might not suffer in her reputation and be stoned as an adulteress. Be you tender and compassionate to the failings of others; although they are matter of fact, prevent the spreading of them; give a check to such discourse. Consider, likewise, how the divine goodness afforded comfort, when human means gave no relief. An angel is dispatched to acquaint him with the mystery. Oh, what transcendent joy, after piercing grief! Learn to expect the divine pleasure with steadfast resignation. Trust in the goodness of your God; accuse yourself of former diffidence. Congratulate the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph on their mutual joy.

MEDITATION V.—OF ST. JOSEPH'S VIRTUES, EXERCISED AT THE BIRTH, CIRCUMCISION, AND PRESENTATION OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

[*The preparatory prayer, as in former meditations.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself with the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph in the stable at Bethlehem, where Christ was born, and laid in a manger, between an ox and an ass. How afterward St. Joseph circumcised Him, and gave Him the holy name of Jesus. Lastly, how he presented the Son of God in the temple, where he was met by Simeon and Ann.

Second Prelude.—Beg grace to profit by St. Joseph's contemplations in these mysteries.

Point 1.

Consider, How St. Joseph, being returned from Zachary's house, was obliged to undertake a winter's journey, to be enrolled at Bethlehem, with his spouse, in compliance with the edicts of Augustus Cæsar. He cheerfully obeyed; so ought you to do toward those who have command over you, even in difficult matters. What pious discourses had he not on the road, for thirty miles, with the Virgin spouse? He patiently endured the inconveniences in traveling, finding no place in the inn, and being forced to take shelter with an ox and an ass in a poor stable, to herd with brutes. How often have you entertained our Lord in the like manner, by bringing Him into a breast full of brutish passions? Admire the patience of your Redeemer, in suffering you to receive Him so unworthily. The blind man, knowing the king is present, stands with great respect, although he sees him not. You know that the Son of God visits you personally, yet remain stupid as a senseless animal. Give frequent thanks to God, that you have not been punished like Oza (2 Kings vi.), who was struck dead for rashness, in only touching the ark of the covenant; whereas, perhaps, you have more than once received your God sacrilegiously. Reflect on St. Joseph's sorrow, seeing the vileness of the place: no accommodation, at midnight, in a rigid season. The Son of God would be born in these severe circumstances, choosing what He loved. Be ye vile in your own

eyes, and cut off superfluities by mortification. The blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, being wrapped in prayer and contemplation, the immortal Son was born according to the flesh. He was laid in a cold manger, and St. Joseph beheld Him with tears of fatherly tenderness; sighing to heaven, and prostrate before Him, he honored Him with heroic acts of faith, like his who said afterward, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." He adored his Saviour, and thanked Him for His immense goodness. Imitate these and the like acts. Lament that your sins were the occasion of our Lord's suffering in the manger. Reflect what joy succeeded, when the crib resembled paradise. Choirs of angels sang glory to their God; the shepherds adored, and the three kings, in an humble posture, offered rich presents to their almighty Sovereign. Do you also join with heavenly spirits in rendering thanks for innumerable favors, which you may call to mind one by one. Offer your memory, understanding, and will, to Him who gave them. Beg, by St. Joseph's intercession, that you may adore God upon earth with an undefiled conscience, and eternally in heaven hereafter.

Point 2.

Consider, St. Joseph's obedience to the law, in circumcising our Saviour, who was exempt from, yet would bear the badge of, original sin, though incapable of committing any. You excuse yourself criminally from fulfilling the divine law, and study to appear a saint, while you are an inveterate sinner; examine, repent, and detest pride, the source of all evils. Jesus' humility confounds your haughtiness. Reflect how St. Joseph's heart was wounded with grief before he saw the blood of Christ. At pronouncing the name of Jesus, he fell upon his knees; the nine choirs of angels prostrated, and all hell trembled; that name being to confound their exulting over captive souls. Offer tears of compunction to Him who redeemed you with streams of blood. Take not the name of the Lord your God in vain, which is holy and terrible; nor suffer any under your command to speak the language of devils. As far as in you lies, concur to the salvation of others. Since God came on earth to save sinful mankind, do you condescend to what may be instrumental in so glorious a work.

Point 3.

Consider, What St. Luke records (chap. iii.): His father (so the evangelist styles St. Joseph) and mother were marveling at what was said of Him. They were in ecstasies, hearing the prophecies of Simeon and Anna: they marveled that God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son; they admired the infinite goodness of Christ; contemplating in Him the boundless and bottomless ocean, as it were, become a

drop, and the whole fiery sphere as a little spark. They were astonished that He who created the universe by His fiat was to be redeemed by a pair of doves. They offered Him to the eternal Father; and, to complete His inestimable purchase, gave what was required by the law of Moses. My poor soul, join with them in admiration; marvel that Christ should love you, an ungrateful worm, so ardently as to suffer for you. Admire His divine patience in not punishing your manifold crimes; whereas many have been cut off in the flower of their youth, and sent to burn eternally in hell for sins far less in number than yours. Stand confounded; reproach yourself for having so frequently sold your Lord, like treacherous Judas, for petty interest or sordid passion. Rejoice that He has ransomed you, and gives you grace to purchase His favor, by leading a new life, resembling the simplicity of the dove.

MEDITATION VI.—OF THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, HIS RETURN FROM THENCE, AND OF THE LOSING OF JESUS, AND FINDING HIM IN THE TEMPLE.

[*The preparatory prayer, etc.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself traveling with the blessed company in so tedious a journey, and a rigid season, Jesus not being one year old (Maldonatus on Matt.). Reflect how they were obliged to leave their own country, and to live among perverse idolaters. How, after their return to Palestine, they went to adore in Jerusalem, where Jesus was lost, and found in the temple, sitting among the doctors.

Second Prelude.—Beg grace and light to practise such virtues as St. Joseph experienced in Egypt and Judea.

Point 1.

Consider, When St. Joseph received the command, "Arise, take the child and his mother, and fly into Egypt," he obeyed the very moment. He immediately quitted home, country, and conveniences, to live among perverse idolaters, who hated the Hebrews. He traveled through deserts, wanting sometimes necessaries, passing from mountain to valley to find a little spring to refresh the fainting family. The love of Jesus made all things easy to him. Oh, my disobedient soul, how often has God commanded me by clear inspirations, Arise, perform that act of virtue; fly that dangerous company; burn that pernicious book; make haste to the throne of mercy, by serious repentance; and I slumbered on in my habitual tepidity, and slept in my iniquities! I will now arise with the prodigal son—I will make haste to my heavenly Father, loving Him, grieving and confounding myself, purporting newness of life, and surmounting with divine grace all difficulties laid in the way by men and devils. Ponder how it pierced St. Joseph's heart to see God offended by those profane idolaters. You have so little compassion for other sinners that you will

not drop one tear for your own crimes. St. Joseph took pleasure in being despised as a common artisan, working to support the holy family. Your daily study is to be esteemed ; you court vanity, and shun solid glory. My soul, bear patiently hard usage ; disown utterly the maxims of the world. Refuse not to be clothed with contempt like thy Lord and Master. Be not terrified with an imaginary enemy and league with a real one.

Point 2.

Consider, The steadfast hope and invincible fortitude of St. Joseph. His whole trust was in divine Providence. He gave no attention to diabolical suggestions, viz., Why to fly ? Why so far off ? Why at this season ? Why into Egypt ? Why not to the three kings, who would take it as an honor to entertain us, instead of to a perverse nation, where we cannot expect any other treatment than affront or ill usage ? The holy patriarch was deaf to this language ; he cheerfully arose at midnight, like the patriarch Abraham, when commended to sacrifice his son Isaac ; nothing could induce him to move one step out of the road which God had pointed out to him. All the monsters of Egypt were looked on without fear or terror—God was his hope. Be not curious to pry into the divine ordinations ; reject carnal arguments, dissuading from what the Almighty commands. Fix your eyes on heaven, and as difficulties show themselves let your hope increase. Beg, by the intercession of St. Joseph, courage and resolution to quit all that is valuable upon earth, rather than disobey the voice of your Creator. Be mindful that the All-powerful is your hope, who will send relief in due time, as he did to St. Joseph by an angel, ordering the return of the holy family to Palestine.

Point 3.

Consider, That every man was obliged to go and worship God in the temple of Jerusalem, on the feast of Azims. It lasted seven days ; and although St. Joseph might have made his appearance, only, to fulfill the law, and returned to Nazareth, yet he remained the seven days, taking that opportunity to satisfy his devotion by honoring the eternal Father in His own house. Endeavor, likewise, to have interior fervor and recollection as well as an exterior reverence and modesty, at the time of divine service, and in private prayer. St. Joseph was apprehensive in returning to Judea, because Archelaus reigned there ; now he fears not to appear in Jerusalem, where a cruel prince sat upon the throne, because the worship of God was concerned. Be courageous in discharging your duty ; despise human respects, and what the wicked world may say of you, by obeying God rather than man. Consider, also, how Christ being lost, St. Joseph sought Him with a sorrowful heart ; he could not find Him among his

kindred and acquaintance, nor in any other place but the temple. If ever you be so unfortunate as to lose your Lord by sin, lament bitterly; have recourse to prayer, turn from creatures, do not despond, avoid all occasions of relapsing and frequent the holy sacraments, for He is to be found in the temple. Reflect on the twofold joys St. Joseph experienced at the sight of Jesus; the first, because he found the God of his heart, whose profound wisdom was admired by the learned doctors; the second in hearing the blessed Virgin term him Jesus' father, which prerogative was entertained with humility and confusion, as thinking himself unworthy of that glorious title. St. Joseph sought not esteem or praises; that is the folly which I run after—empty shadows of vanity, and decline real glory! My soul, glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and cause all the angels to rejoice at the return of the lost sheep, that is, thyself.

MEDITATION VII.—OF ST. JOSEPH'S MANY YEARS' CONVERSATION WITH JESUS AND MARY AT NAZARETH.

[*The preparatory prayer, etc.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine yourself to have had the happiness and honor of frequently entering the house of Nazareth, and contemplate what probably was said or done by the holy family.

Second Prelude.—Beg light and grace to practise virtue, in imitation of St. Joseph during the course of your whole life.

Point I.

Consider, Those words of the royal prophet, "With a saint you will become a saint" (Ps. xvii. 26), and contemplate how great a proficient in sanctity St. Joseph must have been, by a daily and hourly conversation for many years with the Holy of holies, the Son of God. What he learned in the school of Jesus is not understood by the most eminent contemplatives. St. Paul, "caught up into paradise" (2 Cor. xii. 4), heard words not lawful for man to utter. St. Joseph was made a partaker, also, of divine secrets; and if the apostle humbly glorified that God who made him a fit minister of the New Testament (2 Cor. iii. 6), it cannot be conceived how much St. Joseph was qualified to discharge his duty as legal father to the Word incarnate, and real spouse to the Mother of God. The long recollections of Paphnutius, and the mental prayers of Pacomius, are but rough drafts of our holy patriarch's uninterrupted union with his Redeemer. He had theological, cardinal, and other virtues to perfection under so great a Master. Consider each part, and select something for imitation. Beg of St. Joseph, by the merits of Christ, and the love he bore his immaculate spouse, that he will be your intercessor and instructor toward learning the science of the saints. Reflect on St. Joseph's care and pains to support the holy family; all labor was sweet and easy, be-

cause undertaken for Jesus and Mary. If you have charge over others, promote God's honor, and permit not that He be offended; "For whoever has not the care of those under him, especially domestics, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. v. 8.) If you connive at others' sins, you make them your own, and, although silent, you become an accomplice. Assist others in spiritual and temporal necessities, and employ your time like St. Joseph, working to please Jesus.

Point 2.

Consider, The words of Solomon (Prov. vi. 27), "Can a man hide a fire in his bosom, and his garment not burn?" Could St. Joseph have the infant Jesus in his arms, so close to his heart, and not burn with divine love, like the highest seraphim? When the two disciples traveled toward Emaus, and our blessed Saviour, risen from His sepulchre, discoursed with them upon the road, they found their "hearts burning within them, while He spoke to them in the way." (St. Luke xxiv. 32.) St. Joseph was thrice happy in such discourse for many years; the Son of God declared to him the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the necessity of suffering. When Christ fell upon His knees to pray, Joseph and Mary by His side, the patriarch lost himself in ecstasies; he prostrated himself in the presence of God; how often did he tell Him, "My Lord, you know I love you, joy of my heart, God of my soul!" while tears of devotion came trickling down his face. Samuel mistook the voice of the Lord, discoursing personally with him. Oh, my soul, prepare the way for divine grace by fervent prayer, and, according to your station, set others on fire with the love of God and their neighbor. Defer not the time of your devotions, as if you designed to serve your Creator in the last place; let Him have preference to insignificant conversation and trifling visits. Ponder, also, that probably, according to the rules of perfection, St. Joseph distributed the hours of the day: some set out for prayer, some for pious conferences, others for work, and so of the rest, according to exigencies. Observe similar order and give good example, which influences more than words. Mistake not the voice of the enemy, transforming himself into an angel of light. Follow the instructions of a prudent director, who will guard you against what is suggested by the devil and self-love.

Point 3.

Consider, How hard a matter it is to find the true elevation of this resplendent star, St. Joseph. If bright rays darted out from Moses' face, after forty days' and forty nights' conversation with God on Mount Sinai (or, as some doctors are of opinion, with an angel deputed by the Cre-

ator), insomuch that the princes of the synagogue durst not draw near him, and the law-giver placed a veil over his face (Exod. xxxv. 33), what a glorious interior had St. Joseph, who conversed with God (made man) face to face for many years! St. Paul, in his defence against the obstinate Jews, instanced how he was taught the law at the feet of Gamaliel. (Acts xxii. 3.) St. Joseph learned the highest perfection of the law from Him who delivered it to Moses. In his daily actions he united the active and contemplative life, sometimes working for Jesus, at other times sitting at His feet and hearing the Word. He stood astonished to behold Him, who created the world out of nothing with a few words, working at the carpenter's trade, and expecting His orders. Admire the divine goodness; be enamored with humility; join ejaculatory prayers to common actions. Reflect, that as St. Joseph nourished Christ corporally, so Jesus nourished His foster-father spiritually, who improved in all virtues, and became a great and glorious saint.

MEDITATION VIII.—OF ST. JOSEPH'S HAPPY DEPARTURE.

[*The preparatory prayer, etc.*]

First Prelude.—Imagine you see St. Joseph upon his death-bed, our blessed Saviour and His Mother there present. How he sweetly rendered his soul to God; was conducted by angels to limbo, and his body decently interred.

Second Prelude.—Beg grace to lead such a life, as to be favored, on your death-bed, with the protection of Jesus, and the special intercession of Mary and Joseph.

Point 1.

Consider, That before the nuptial feast of Cana in Galilee, St. Joseph was visited with his final sickness. (St. Epiphan., *Hær.* 78. Franciscus Lucas Baron.) He then exercised, as he had done throughout the whole course of his life, seraphic acts of divine love, and heroic acts of patience and resignation, which the Son of God suggested to him. Oh, what a heavenly scene was it, to behold the second person of the blessed Trinity and His beloved Mother attending at his death, and comforting him in his last moments! St. Joseph, with tears of joy, returning humble thanks for the honor they had done him, by acknowledging the discharge of his duty, and for their affection toward him. He begged, as the last favor in this world, a blessing from Christ's hand, that fills every creature with benediction; and likewise the powerful intercession of his immaculate spouse for a happy passage to eternity: which being granted with grateful tears, he petitioned, like holy Simeon, to be dismissed in peace; and wrapt in an ecstasy, with the love of God, he breathed out his precious soul. Thrice happy death, the reward of a virtuous life! My God, let my departure be like that of the just. Infinite goodness, infinite power,

assist me at that dreadful trial. Let me not be confounded at the hour of death. Ponder, also, how Jesus, with His sacred hands, closed the patriarch's eyes. To deserve a happy death, shut now your eyes to the world; make such timely preparations as you would wish to have done when struggling in your agony. Exult over hell by a change of life, and send up aspirations, desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Be exact in every confession, as if it were to be the last. Do not sleep in mortal sin, lest sudden death seize you, and you be lost eternally. Address St. Joseph, that you may have the benediction of Jesus on your death-bed, and rejoice with the thought of being called out of banishment.

Point 2.

Consider, That if angels carried the soul of poor Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, a noble choir of those blessed spirits were commanded to conduct and wait on St. Joseph to limbo. At his coming thither, they might make use of the high priest Joachim's words to conquering Judith, and sing, "Here enters the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, and the honor of the people. This is the soul of just Joseph, whom the eternal Father appointed to be the foster-father of His only begotten Son, and spouse to the Mother of God." Reflect how, in limbo, the souls of kings, patriarchs and prophets rejoiced at his entrance; but much more when he gave an agreeable relation of the long-expected Messiah, and that their redemption was near at hand. Oh, my soul, languish for that happy hour, when thy good angel will conduct thee to hear the transporting invitation, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord." Obey the angel's voice, exciting you to acts of faith, hope, love of God, contrition, and resignation; that they may be familiar to you at your death. Reflect on your former sins, that if you had been called away such and such a time, you would have been burning with Cain and Judas. Give thanks for your preservation; resolve rather to dismiss all that is dear to you in the world than divine grace. Consider, likewise, how our blessed Saviour and the immaculate Virgin conducted St. Joseph's corpse to the place of interment (Baronius, lib. 6, c. 8), which was the valley of Josephat, near the place where, afterward, the blessed Virgin's body was deposited for some days, between Mount Sion and Mount Olivet (Ven. Beda, Bruchardus, etc.); and since the bodies of several saints have been preserved from corruption, it is no rash thought to be of opinion that our holy patriarch was favored after the like manner. O precious relics! Oh, what an honor, that God in person should take care of the funeral, and with His sacred hands place the body in the sepulchre! Admire the dignity of St. Joseph. Carry about you relics which terrify devils and keep them at a distance. Detest novelty; shun the dangerous company of those



THE GLORIES OF THE ANGELS.

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who cast out words reflecting on any practice of the holy Church of Christ. Live so that you may appear with security and joy in the valley of Josephat, when Christ comes to judge the world.

Point 3.

Consider, How Christ our Lord, rising from His sepulchre, visited His expecting servants in limbo. He took them from thence, as trophies for His bitter passion; and whereas many bodies of saints (St. Matt. xxvii. 52) arose, that had slept, we may not doubt St. Joseph's being of that happy number; as it is piously believed (St. Bernardin, tom. 3, Serm. de St. Joseph; Gerson, etc.) that St. Joseph is, both in soul and body, glorious in heaven, although those of others rising at that time might return to their tomb. The souls of all the ancient holy patriarchs, prophets, and other saints, were retained in limbo till Christ our Redeemer visited them and set them free. "He hath led captivity captive," says the royal prophet, speaking of Christ: and when He ascended into heaven, He took them with Him thither to glory; they joining the celestial choirs, sounding forth His victory over sin and death, in the highest strains of gratitude, love, adoration, praise, and thanksgiving; among whom may be justly ranked, in a superior degree of glory, the patriarch St. Joseph, who was dignified on earth to be the guardian of the Son of God and Redeemer of the world, the Word incarnate. The trust was the greatest, which he most faithfully discharged; and his merit must be in proportion in the distribution. The eternal Truth declares it: "Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." What joy did he then experience for past sufferings! What glory for contentment! What a resplendent crown for purity of life! Oh, my sluggish soul, take pains, like St. Joseph, in serving Christ, that you may be rewarded with him: call frequently to mind those divine words of our Redeemer: "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his soul?" (St. Matt. xvi. 26.) The enjoyment is short, and the punishment eternal. On the contrary, faithful servants of the Omnipotent have transient trials, short afflictions, whether exterior or interior; but they gain a never-ending and happy kingdom. Say often to yourself, What can separate me from the love of my God? Not all the menaces of cruel men, nor all the malice of hell. I will love my omnipotent Creator—I will love my most merciful Redeemer—I will love my most gracious Sanctifier, purely for their own sakes—I will love them eternally.

THE GLORIES OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

DEDICATORY EPISTLE

TO OUR BLESSED LADY OF ANGELS.

GREAT Queen of Paradise! Sovereign of those holy spirits who are confirmed in grace and glory! prostrate at your feet, where the greatest sinners obtain pardon—the weak, strength—the tepid, fervor—and the just, sanctity—I offer and present to you this little work, designed to promote the knowledge and love of the holy angels, your faithful subjects, and the illustrious princes of your celestial court. To whom could I more justly dedicate it, since, as the mistress of these glorious spirits, you must be, of all others, the most interested for their glory. Besides, blessed Mother! you know (and it is gratifying to me to repeat it) that I have nothing which is not yours—for I consider it a greater happiness to be your slave, than to enjoy all the honors the world could bestow. Bless, then, O holy Virgin, this work; diffuse upon it your choicest benedictions; make it evident that it is all yours by the unction which will be found in every page—that through the adorable merits of Jesus, your beloved Son, it may establish among men a true and fervent devotion to the holy angels, to the honor of God alone, our beginning, our last end, our only all in all things—God alone! God alone! God alone!

TO MY GOOD ANGEL GUARDIAN.

Most faithful guardian of all that I am! when I reflect on my ingratitude and your unceasing cares, my mind is bewildered, and I know not what to say but that you are a heavenly intelligence, a spirit of light and love and a prince of the celestial realms, while I am but dust and ashes, a miserable sinner, and the last of men. Great prince! why do you love me so tenderly? why is there not one moment of my life undistinguished by your favors? What shall I render you in return for them? I have nothing to offer, dear guardian of my heart, except the firm resolution of loving you henceforward with your blessed companions in glory. Pre-

sent my resolution, together with this work, to those holy choirs; it will be better received from you; and tell them, in your angelic manner, how sorry I am for not having always loved them. Tell them how much I wish to see their devotion extended, and that all men should know and love the holy angels, for the glory of God alone. It is this God alone, most amiable of friends, that I desire in all things. Amen—Amen—God alone! God alone! God alone! the end of all devotion to the glorious Virgin, the angels and saints. Amen.

AN EXHORTATION TO THE LOVE AND HONOR OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

The science of the sage, says the Holy Ghost, is like, in its abundance, to an inundation of waters; for, as the land is sometimes overspread by the swelling of the sea over its boundaries, so the mind of a Christian is sometimes so penetrated with the lights of faith, that it is absorbed in wonder and amazement. This assertion is fully verified in the knowledge which revelation gives of the holy angels. However slightly we consider what it teaches of them, we discover so many and such powerful reasons to love these blessed spirits that we cannot refuse to do so. We may desire to declare our sentiments on this matter, but we are not able. It is the property of great things to baffle description, and the motives which challenge our love for the holy angels are inexpressible; but love being inflexible and "strong as death," it must appear in some way. So if it be difficult to speak of these holy spirits, it would be much more so to be "silent in their praise."

All possible motives concur in pressing you to love these spirits of love. If you regard God, you must love His angels; if you regard yourself, you must love the angels. Pure love commands it—interested love requires it—God alone wishes it—the holy Virgin and all the saints desire it.

If you live to God alone, you must be devout to the angels; even though you still live to nature, you must love these blessed spirits. We are differently affected—some are attracted by honors, some by riches, and others by pleasure. If pleasure attract you, these blessed spirits can procure it for you, for they are placed at the source of eternal joy. If you wish to have the interest of the mighty, there is nothing in created being more powerful than the angelic nature. If you sigh after greatness, know that these peers of the celestial realms procure for their clients the sceptre of immortal honor and the diadem of unfading glory. Ah! how different are the dispositions of the angels, compared with those of the great ones of this earth! These wish to reign alone, whereas the highest ambition of those princes of love is to share their thrones with us, that we may partake in their felicity. If you are captivated by beauty,

learn that the angels are beautiful beyond description, and that their beauty is not subject to decay. Besides, the love and constancy of these amiable friends are incomparable; the former includes every species of love—the latter is so great that, whatever ingratitude we evince towards them, they seem to overlook it, incessantly watching over all that concerns us, defending us against our enemies, and rendering us every service. If you are of those souls who act by the movements of grace, and live to God alone, you must love the angels. If the motive of the will of God influence you, you must be devout to them, since these blessed spirits are the objects of His complacency and the masterpieces of His love. We often err in the choice of friends, but we cannot be deceived in loving those whom God wishes us to love; and in the case before us, He Himself sets the example. Here it is, O heart of man! that you must cease to be a heart, or love the angels—for where will you go to defend yourself from the arrows of their charity? If you ascend to heaven, you will be enraptured with the transcendent beauty of these holy spirits—if you traverse the earth, its elements—fire, air, earth and water—recount their love. The sun, by his vivifying influence on this nether globe, announces this truth from day to day; the aurora, which precedes the dawn, proclaims the loving cares of these spiritual stars of the morning of the world; the most obscure nights are not so gloomy as to conceal their bounties—their lights never diminish. These sentinels, planted on the watch-towers of Israel, defend its gates night and day. If we descend to purgatory, we shall see the love of those blessed spirits burn with more intensity for the poor prisoners than the flames which purify them. Nor are infidel kingdoms nor remote nations abandoned by them. They help sinners as well as the just; no barbarian, no creature, how wicked soever, is deemed unworthy of their cares. Now, are not these powerful motives to love the angels? and if our hearts were not dull and heavy indeed, would we be insensible to them? O! let us here shed floods of tears over our blindness and insensibility; for, after all, these blessed spirits are little loved. It is true that some persons honor the angels' guardians; but how many honor the cherubim, the seraphim, or the other choirs? I know that this arises from their not being interior; for, alas! men are so absorbed in earthly cares, so besotted with the pleasures of sense, that they are little affected with spiritual things. There are indeed, a few, whose detachment from earth renders them susceptible of the purest elevations of grace; yet even many of these do not extend their devotion beyond the angels' guardians; they are quite unmindful of the higher choirs. And why? when the more elevated they are, the greater is their power and love, and the more there is of God in them, which is, with those that love purely, the motive of motives. If the kings of the earth

were willing to receive you into their friendship, surely you would not refuse it. Now, consider that it depends on yourself to form an eternal alliance with the heavenly princes, and by their influence to be one day crowned with them in the celestial empire.

Here I must confess I would wish to do all in my power to awaken and diffuse among men a little devotion to the angels. This it is that induces me to give this pious book to the public, of which I have been thinking for many years. I have so much reason to believe that God requires it from me, that it would be a great infidelity to refuse it; after our little tracts on "God Alone;" on "The Love of Jesus in the Adorable Sacrament;" on "The Admirable Mother of God," etc., it is but just that I should write something for the holy angels. It may, perhaps, be said that books of devotion are already numerous enough; but the glorious St. Francis de Sales has long since replied to that objection. Alas! why not complain that persons are almost always speaking of the world? their whole occupation is with whatever strikes the senses. How few in a whole city entertain themselves with God, or the dear ways which lead to Him! How many letters are every day written throughout the world, and how few of them regard the interest of God! Some are about lands, or money, or goods; others are to gain or to preserve the friendship and esteem of creatures. Oh, blindness of the human mind! Oh, obduracy of the human heart! Truly it demands tears of blood to say after this that there is too much written for the love and interest of God. Abominable world! I shall ever hold you in detestation. I care little for what you say—God alone! God alone! God alone! is sufficient for me: your esteem merits not a single thought. If it be said that our style is low, we are quite satisfied: it is this which gives us greater reason to expect upon it the divine benediction; because, where there is least of the creature, there is most of God. My nothingness supports me in this work, since it is from nothing God has drawn His most stupendous works. Confiding in the protection of Jesus and Mary, and in the help of the holy angels, I undertake it. I could wish to go from city to city, from kingdom to kingdom, to proclaim the perfections of these holy spirits, and the motives we have to love them. I could wish to cry aloud in the streets and public places, O men! love and honor the angels! St. John Chrysostom wished that these words of Ecclesiastes, "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity," were written on the doors of all public and private buildings, that men might ever have in view the emptiness of human things; and, for my part, I would desire the same, for these words of St. Leo, "O men! make yourselves friends of the angels." I would wish that sermons were preached to manifest their greatness, and that their excellencies were made the subject of private conversations.

After all, we can never worthily acquit ourselves of our obligations to these amiable spirits. Hence, the holy fathers use every argument to induce us to love them, and point out to us a variety of ways whereby to testify our devotion toward them. Among the rest, St. Denis, a contemporary of the apostles, and filled with their spirit, wrote admirable things of these holy spirits, and delighted in taking the name "Philange," which means "Friend of the angels."

O amiable spirits! my greatest ambition is to be honored with your friendship. I love you—obtain that I may love you more. I have nothing more valuable than my heart: I place it in your hands, that it may love but what you love—God alone. I possess nothing more precious than my life: I consecrate it entirely to your honor. Oh, that I could build churches and erect oratories to you—that I could establish sodalities, whose end would be to espouse your interest, and make known your glories! But, since this is impracticable, I shall say in these few lines, that you are amiable and loving, yet very little loved. I shall say, O men, love the angels! they are faithful friends, powerful protectors, wise masters, tender parents, affectionate brothers. Love the angels, apostolic men! for they are the missionaries of paradise. Love the angels, preachers of the world! they are profoundly skilled in the science of eternity. Love the angels, priests! for it is by their ministry the divine oblation is made. Love the angels, religious! these admirable spirits are always retired in God. Love the angels, seculars! those good intelligences pity you in the dangers to which you are continually exposed. Love the angels, married persons! the succor afforded Tobias by the Archangel Raphael, evinces the care of your state. Love the angels, widows and orphans! they are indefatigable in providing for persons in distress. Love the angels, virgins; again I say to *you*, love the angels! they are great friends of virginity, being charmed to see frail mortals live on earth as they live in heaven. Love the angels, just souls! they are infallible guides in the way to God. Love the angels, sinners! they will obtain your pardon. Love the angels, afflicted souls! they are the consolation of the miserable, and the help of the distressed. Love the angels, ye rich and great! they will teach you that nothing is worth regarding but eternity.

Love the seraphim, O men! they are the princes of pure love. Love the cherubim, they are skilled in the science of the saints. Love the thrones, they patronize peace of heart and tranquillity of soul. Love the dominations, they will teach you the art of self-government. Love the virtues, they are masters in the school of perfection. Love the powers, they are your defence. Love the principalities, they preside over states and kingdoms. Love the archangels, they are zealous for your well

being, and obtain for you a thousand benedictions. Love the angels, they are celestial stars, whose influence we oftener feel, because placed nearer to this nether sphere. Henceforward be all love for those blessed spirits, who so ardently love you.

Bless them, my God! those who are devout to your angels. Bless those who, on reading this poor work, will give themselves to this devotion. Bless them with the benedictions of the just, making them walk in your ways. Bless them with the benediction of Abraham, the spirit of sacrifice; with the benediction of Isaac, the spirit of conformity; with the spirit of Jacob, the spirit of lively faith. Bless them with the benediction of the elect. Bless them with the benediction of the angels, making them sharers in your never-ending joys! Great and august Queen of Paradise, bless them with your protection—that, being all united in seeking the interest of God alone, God alone may reign in their hearts forever. Amen.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY ANGELS.

First Part.

MOTIVE THE FIRST.

The Admirable Perfections of these Blessed Spirits.

WE have already said, and again repeat, that the perfection of the angels is like to an immense sea without shore or bottom. Enlightened souls feel that all they can say of them is nothing, their greatness being above the reach of human thought. The angelic nature contains within itself a world of perfections: but if we add to it the consideration of their grace and glory, it is truly admirable. However perfect human nature may become, it is still, as faith teaches, very inferior to the angelic nature. A certain theologian has asserted (although, indeed, it be not the common opinion), that the least of the angels exceeds in glory the greatest of the saints; and he grounded his opinion on this text of the Holy Scripture, "He who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist."

The angels are spiritual beings, incorruptible in their nature, perfectly disengaged from matter, and quite free from the miseries to which we are incident. They possess wonderful intelligence; what the greatest geniuses have not been able to comprehend is perfectly understood by them. They know many things in one and the same moment, and without the least difficulty. Their manner of understanding is not like ours; at the first sight which they have of a thing, they know its whole import, and all its consequences—hence, they are called by excellence "Intelligences." The Scripture, to declare to us this admirable faculty of theirs, says that they are clothed in burning fire. In the Apocalypse they are represented in the habits of the ancient pontiffs, to give us to understand that to these holy spirits the most sacred mysteries of religion are revealed, and as if enveloped in clouds, their lights being too brilliant for our weak vision. The most learned men are ignorant, if compared with these pure intelligences.

The power of the angels is incredible—one alone of these blessed spirits being able to defeat millions of armed men—nay the whole world put

together. [We are told in the Book of Kings, that an angel slew in one night 85,000 of the Assyrians, the enemies of the people of God.] They can make the winds blow, the rain fall, the thunder roar; they can raise tempests, cause earthquakes, give abundance and famine, cure and inflict all sorts of maladies, and operate many other things, almost in a moment. It is to mark their celerity that they are painted with wings; it surpasses that of the wind: in an instant, they can pass from one end of the world to the other—being thus, in some sense, everywhere, as Tertullian says.

But their beauty is enrapturing: the greatest beauty on earth is deformity in comparison with them, and the least beautiful among the angels possesses more charms than all earthly beauties together. Here the mind is lost in the contemplation of an infinity of beauties, which are to be found among the angelic choirs; for if the least of the angels be so charming, and if they be so numerous, my God, what beauty is to be seen in the holy Sion! To give us some idea of this truth, St. Anselm says, that if God put an angel in the sun's orbit, and environed him with as many suns as there are stars, and permitted the blessed spirit to emit in a borrowed form a single ray of his glory, it would at once eclipse all the splendor of the suns, and render them invisible. All is wonderful in these holy spirits. An angel, to recreate St. Francis, touched a lute so melodiously that the saint thought he would have died of joy. That miraculous bird, whose notes so charmed a religious servant of God that he passed many years listening to them without feeling the time longer than a quarter of an hour, was doubtless an angel. Some might question the truth of this story, but Father Corneille de la Pierre testifies, that having visited the monastery wherein this person lived, he found the fact proved beyond the possibility of doubt. It was reasonable that these holy spirits should be created in heaven, as being the abode of all happiness. The precious stones, formerly shown the Prophet Ezechiel in a vision, figure the different perfections of the angels. The holy fathers surpass themselves when there is question of them. We can indeed say, that if the beauty of the Creator is anywhere to be seen it is in the angels, their excellence being without imperfection. Alas! how unlike our perfection, in which there is always mingled an infinity of defects! The greatness of these blessed spirits is without baseness—their science without ignorance—their light without darkness—their power without weakness—their beauty without defect—their love without inconstancy—their peace without trouble—their action continual, yet without fatigue—their happiness without alloy—their felicity complete, and without admixture of any evil.

When Manue, as is related in the Book of Judges, demanded the name of the angel who appeared to him, he told him it was "Admirable," because he represented God in a wonderful manner; and Jacob having

had a vision of an angel, says that he had seen the Lord face to face. Will not the consideration of all these perfections of the angels excite you to love them? You who are so prone to love whatever is beautiful, and noble, and perfect? This truth merits deep consideration, the glory of God, the author of all these excellencies and perfections, being concerned in it.

MOTIVE SECOND.

The incomparable goodness of the Angels.

“Nothing,” says the holy bishop of Geneva, St. Francis de Sales, “nothing more affects a good heart than to see itself loved, but if the lover be of superior rank, it greatly enhances the motive of reciprocal love.” If this be true, we must either love the angels, or renounce love altogether. These great princes, of whom we have said such wonderful things in the preceding chapter, not only love us, but also in such a manner that it would seem they are determined to bear away the prize of love.

They manifest toward us every species of affection; they love us with the love of a father—always seeking our interest, always promoting our welfare, and never omitting any occasion of procuring us that celestial inheritance which has been purchased for us by the merits of the adorable Jesus. They love us with a maternal love—for it is written, that “they bear us up in their hands;” they take care of our souls and bodies; they have their eyes ever fixed on us, and caress us continually with all the tenderness that love can inspire. They love us with the love of a brother, regarding us as the younger members of the family; and, what is more wonderful, and more worthy of heaven than of earth, they are not sorry to see us their equals in glory; nay, our angel guardians do all they can to render us more glorious in paradise than they are themselves. They love us with the love of impassioned lovers—incessantly seeking our friendship, continually thinking of us, and even quitting the blissful regions of immortality to abide with us here on earth. They love us as good pastors—for is it not of them we can say, that “they neither slumber nor sleep who keep Israel”? They love us as physicians, healing our wounds, curing our maladies, and restoring us to health; they love us as advocates, negotiating all our affairs, in heaven and on earth; as faithful guides, conducting us in the true way to perfection; as good masters, abundantly rewarding the little services we render them; as bountiful kings, defending us from our enemies, and causing us to live in peace and security.

O my God! are we not then overpowered with motives to love your angels! But when did they begin to love us? The moment we began

to live—nor have they since, nor will they, to the last moment of our existence, cease to love us. They love us in all times and places—in heaven, on earth, in purgatory—even in our moments of ingratitude they are immutable in our love! It is then certain that these blessed spirits are our best friends; that their love is the most faithful, constant, amiable, patient, universal, which can possibly be. All in it is great, all in it is charming, all in it is admirable, all in it is disinterested—for what do they receive for this wonderful kindness? Injuries, ingratitude, forgetfulness. Infidels know them not, heretics refuse to honor them, nor are Catholics even mindful of them. Ah! who can comprehend this monstrous return for so much love! Such an impression does this consideration make upon me that I would wish to go through the world bewailing the obduracy of the human heart. Here it is, indeed, that the obduracy of the human heart is in its last excess. O men! O men! deliver yourselves now at least to these attractions; return from your unhappy state; love the angels; again I say, love the angels, and love the God of the angels, for it is in Him alone all that is good and amiable deserves to be loved.

MOTIVE THIRD.

All the Angels are employed in the service of Man.

I confess that, continuing to write of the angels, my heart is insensibly touched with their love; and no wonder if it all were liquefied before these blessed spirits, who are, as the Psalmist says, “a devouring fire.” O amiable spirits! here permit my poor soul to sigh for love. Either suffer me to die, or to live as you wish. May I love you with a love according to the heart of Jesus, the King of love; and of Mary, the Queen of holy love. We should cease to live, or breathe only the purity of this love. To resume: Are not the foregoing motives sufficiently powerful to engage us to love the angels? But we can furnish many others. It is not one, not a certain number, of these celestial spirits that are employed in our service. St. Paul says that they are *all* deputed for our salvation. All the angels, says St. Augustine, are employed in our defence, since they and we make but one same city of God. It is not alone the angels of the last choir, says St. Chrysostom, that watch for the safety of men; the higher choirs are also deputed to defend them. Some question if the higher angels descend upon earth to assist man; but how will these explain the testimonies which the holy Scripture gives us to this effect? St. Raphael, who guided Tobias when going to Rages, said of himself, that he was one of the seven spirits who stand before the throne. They were the cherubim who appeared to Ezechiel. It was to a cherub that God committed the care of the terrestrial paradise, and it was a seraph

who purified the lips of Isaiah. Ecclesiastical history, too, teaches the same truth: It was one of the highest angels who imprinted the sacred stigmas of our Lord's passion on the body of St. Francis, and another who wounded with a golden dart the heart of St. Teresa. But this is not the essential point: it is quite enough for us to know that in some manner or another all the angels are in our service. And what a host of defenders for us! Holy Job says that their number is without number. Some writers affirm that it surpasses that of the stars of heaven, of the birds of the air, of the drops of water in the ocean, and of all visible creatures. St. Gregory of Nyssa says that there is an infinity of millions of angels: and St. Dionysius the Areopagite, that God alone knows the number of these holy spirits.

What movements of love, what sentiments of consolation do not these truths, if well penetrated, impart to our poor hearts! If it were said to you who read these lines, that the king had deputed to your service one of his principal courtiers, with strict orders to render to you all the manner of favors and services, what would be your gratitude, your amazement, your joy! But history furnishes no such instance of kindness; it is only the King of kings who operates such a prodigy of love. O my soul! my soul! have you ever seriously considered that not only one but all the princes of the God of Paradise watch over you with ineffable care and tenderness, that "all minister to those who are to receive the inheritance of salvation"? O the love of that God who has sent them! O the love of those spirits whom He has sent! What consolation for us! Why after this should we be sad or troubled? One alone of these blessed princes is more than sufficient to defend us, and behold millions of millions—nay, an infinity of millions of them, watching for our safety! But remember, if such powerful protection places you in security, that the friendship of these illustrious princes should serve you for occupation. It is better to form acquaintance with these pure spirits than to amuse one's self with creatures. Their friendship is so much the more holy and advantageous, as there is nothing in them but God alone.

MOTIVE FOURTH.

All Men are assisted by the Angels.

It is unnecessary to seek any other motive to love God than love itself—as our Lord revealed to Mother Magdalen of St. Joseph, a Carmelite religious. But why does God love men so much? Let it be published among the nations, says St. Bernard, and let them confess that the Lord has determined to treat them magnificently. O my God! what is man, that you condescend to give him your only Son, to send him your Holy

Spirit, and depute your angels to guard and defend him! Behold, then, an angel, who is as a great king, endowed with all imaginable glory and perfection, in the service of man—a being compounded of misery and imperfection, a worm of the earth, dust and ashes! But that man, when in the state of sin, should still be protected by the angels, is far more wonderful. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves: the greatest saints have fallen, through weakness or inadvertence, into venial faults—and would to God that there were no greater committed—hell itself being less terrible than a single offence against the divine Majesty; but, alas! men in general have little horror of mortal sin, and easily fall into it. The angels, though struck with amazement at these diabolical excesses, are nevertheless not deterred from assisting these unhappy beings.

O soul! who readest these truths, is it not wonderful that the blessed spirits should lend their aid to those who offend God, considering the knowledge they possess of His unspeakable greatness? Is it not amazing that they are content to remain with those who every day trample on the blood of their God, “and make void the sufferings by which they have been redeemed”? Let us go further: Heretics and infidels have angels who guard them, though their sin be so incomprehensible that we can never in this world attain anything like a notion of it. The Turks, the professed enemies of the Christian name, have their angels—nay, Anti-christ himself will have an angel guardian, says St. Thomas, who will hinder him from committing several evils. The angels serve all these people as their masters, though they know them to be slaves of the devil and victims of hell. Where is the gardener who would water a tree if he knew it would never produce fruit? Where is the friend who would continue to demonstrate his friendship after repeated insults and affronts? Yet all the injuries, revolts, contempt and ingratitude of men diminish not in the least degree the charity of these blessed spirits. They go to seek them in the forests of Canada, in the remotest deserts, in the most gloomy caverns, at the extremities of the earth. You would say that they are beside themselves with love for men, who have nothing of man but the shape and appearance, their lives being wholly earthly and sensual. These celestial beauties give their affections to deformity itself, and yet meet with no other return than ingratitude and contempt. How shocking! how deplorable!

MOTIVE FIFTH.

The Angels render Men innumerable services.

A pious woman, having one night received information that a poor person in the suburbs was lying in extreme necessity, and none of her domestics being within, sent her son with something for her relief. The boy,

being very young, was greatly afraid going by himself to such a lonely place, until a page appeared, bearing a flambeau, and conducted him safely to his destination. His mother doubted not that it might be his good angel who had rendered him the charitable office. These blessed spirits have often appeared visibly to man. The learned interpreter of the Holy Scripture, Cornelius à Lapide, supposes that after the resurrection they will sometimes assume bodies of exquisite beauty to recreate us. It is amazing to see them take every form to render services to us. They have appeared in various shapes, as pilgrims, etc., to serve and benefit man, who does almost nothing to testify his gratitude.

If it were only at certain times they rendered us assistance, it would not be so wonderful; but to be conferring favors on us every moment we exist, is inconceivable—and it is this our good angel does for us. If a prince of the royal blood came and spent some time in waiting on an humble peasant, in a poor cabin, every one would be amazed; but if this peasant was his enemy, one from whom he could expect nothing like gratitude—if, moreover, he not only passed some months with him, but even resolved on remaining in his service as long as he lived, notwithstanding all the vicious propensities and vile habits which he discovered in him, the wonder would be infinitely greater. Yet it is in this manner, O my soul! thy good angel guards thee. It is thus, O ye whom I address! that the Holy Spirit, appointed to be your guardian, executes His commission. This amiable prince never quits us in this valley of tears. The angels, says St. Augustine, enter and go forth with us—they have their eyes ever fixed on us, and on what we do. If we remain at home, they stay with us; if we walk out, they accompany us; let us go where we will, on land or at sea, they are always with us; they are no less present with the merchant in his counting-house, or the matron in the cares of her household, than with the recluse in his desert, or the religious in his cell. O excessive bounty!—even while we sleep, they watch over us—they are always at our side—though we are sinners, and consequently their enemies—though our interior deformity is so great, that if we saw it we could not support the sight—though we spend our lives in sin, or in such frivolous occupations as certainly excite the pity of these blessed spirits—though we corrupt our best actions by numberless defects, they are never weary of our company. Even after death, they visit us in purgatory, and render us in its flames very great consolations. Is not this to be our slaves? Where would we be able to find persons who would sacrifice their liberty so perfectly in the service of kings? O bounty of our God! the princes of paradise our slaves and servants! Well, indeed, did the holy Vincent of Caraffe say that the life of a Christian was a life of astonishment. But the angels not only protect man, they also give

their cares to everything that is destined for his service. According to St. Augustine, these blessed spirits preside over every animate and inanimate thing in this visible world. The stars and the firmament have their angels—the fire, the air, the water, have their angels—kingdoms have their angels, as is seen in the Scriptures—provinces have their angels, for the angels who appeared to Jacob, says Genesis, were the guardians of the provinces through which he passed—towns and cities have their angels—altars, churches, nay, even particular families, have their angels.

Thus the world is full of angels, and it seems that the sweetness of divine Providence renders it necessary ; for if, as some say, there be in the air so great a number of evil spirits, that if they were permitted to assume bodies, they would obscure the light of the sun, how could men be safe from their malicious arts, unless protected by the angels? It is not for nothing that these blessed spirits are sent on earth. As each star has its peculiar influence, so each of the angels produces some particular good. We must be obdurate, indeed, if we are not touched by their services. It is a great pity, that we seldom think but of sensible objects. In vain are we spoken to of spiritual things ; we either understand them not, or forget them with facility. Whatever Eliseus might say to his servant of the protection of these blessed spirits, the poor man could not believe it, until God miraculously opened his eyes, and manifested them to him under visible forms. If the same favor is not given to us, still have we not faith? and can we not behold with our interior eyes these amiable spirits, and acknowledge them as our greatest benefactors, and the faithful ministers of God alone, whom we adore, who is admirable in all His works, and deserves for them eternal, everlasting praise?

MOTIVE SIXTH.

The Angels help us in temporal things.

After having spoken in a general way of the benefits accruing to us from the angels, let us descend to particulars, that the hearts of men may be inexcusable, and be obliged to love these amiable spirits. If favors be to love what wood is to fire, with what ardor should we not burn for the holy angels, overwhelmed as we are with their kindnesses and benefactions, even in temporal things.

They provide for our education. They were those glorious spirits who trained up the little Baptist in the desert, after the death of his holy mother, which took place forty days after she had fled with him from the persecution of Herod. They provide for our bodily nourishment—as in the case of the holy martyrs Firminian and Rusticus, and the prophets Elias and Daniel. They procure for us honors ; a great number of angels

attended at the death of St. Agatha, and composed her epitaph. They recreate our senses : for six months preceding the death of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, they played for him on musical instruments. And during the three days that intervened between the death of the Holy Virgin and her assumption into heaven, they made most melodious concerts near her sacred remains, for the consolation of those who approached them. They accompany us in our journeys—as is evident from the case of Tobias. They visit and console us—as the lives of the fathers of the desert, and those of St. Lidwine and St. Francis testify, as well as acts of the martyrs. And think not, says Abbé Rupert, that they never visited these servants of God, but when they visibly appeared ; they have often been invisibly present, supporting them in their trials, consoling them in their sorrows, and assuaging their torments.

If they procure us benefits, they also deliver us from evils. They freed St. Peter from his chains, delivered Daniel from the lions, and Isaac from the sacrificing knife. In the book of Machabees, we have prodigious examples of the zeal with which they espouse the cause of man, often openly combating for him against his enemies. In fine, there is no want, natural, moral, or physical, in which the holy angels do not assist us. If divine Providence has given us saints to be our deliverers from certain evils, as St. Sebastian and St. Roch from pestilence—St. Laurence from toothache—St. Lucy from pains in the eyes or defective vision—it has given us the angels as assured helpers in all our misfortunes. Let us here consider and admire the protection afforded by the angels to the Hebrew people. It was an angel who conducted them in the wilderness for the space of forty years, by means of a cloud during the day, and a pillar of fire by night—and by the movement given to it by him, they were sheltered from the scorching rays of the sun, and preserved from the hands of Pharaoh and his Egyptians. I leave it to the piety of those who read these truths, to reflect at leisure on this admirable conduct. However slightly they are considered, it is impossible not to be convinced that the services rendered to man by the angels are incomparable—and that the name of the Lord should be magnified, who operates these wonders by the agency of the ministers of His celestial court.

MOTIVE SEVENTH.

The Angels assist us in spiritual things.

Properly speaking, man has but one affair—that of eternity. All that tends not to this great end is not worth a single thought. O ! how wretched and contemptible are all things which the world calls great ! how unworthy the occupation of a Christian soul are its honors and

pleasures! It were well that this truth, "the world and its concupiscence passes away," never departed from our minds: eternity would then occupy us, and the means of acquiring a happy one, among which the patronage of the angels is not the least, would be more fully appreciated.

It is indeed true, that these blessed angels do all that they can to procure for us a glorious immortality. They have been known to press apostolic men, as St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier, to announce the gospel to those "who sat in the shades of death." They have often assisted evangelical laborers. How many children receive baptism by their means, who would otherwise perish in original sin! Behold a wonderful example: In January, 1634, in the city of Vienna, three souls, freed from purgatory, appeared, says Father Loret, of the society of Jesus, to one of our religious, to thank him for having, by his prayers and mortifications, procured their release. On the day of your birth, said they, our good angels revealed to us, that you would one day be our liberator; and know that you are greatly indebted to your angel guardian, for without his care you would have been suffocated, through the carelessness of the attendant, before you received baptism. After procuring for us the life of grace, the angels endeavor to conserve us therein; and hence they prompt us to receive often the adorable Eucharist, which is the life of lives. They have often carried this vivifying sacrament to solitaries and recluses—St. Stanislas Kostka, S. J., received this favor. Nor do they forget the other means of our salvation. Prayer is one of the most powerful; and it is by the angels our petitions are carried before the throne of God: there is no exercise in which they are more present with us than this. Mortification is the sister of prayer—and what have not the angels done to engage us to practice it? They have often visibly given their clients instructions thereon, suitable to their great lights, and convinced them of the absolute necessity of this virtue in all true Christians.

They are most anxious to inspire us with a love for that virtue which assimilates us to them, virginal purity. What have they not done in its defence? They have sometimes combated and destroyed those who attacked it—they have rendered invisible those who possessed it, to preserve them from danger—they, in fine, have sometimes procured from their Creator a temporary suspension of nature's laws, to preserve a virtue, which, raising man above himself, causes him to live in a mortal body a life wholly divine.

But their great object is to inspire us with love for Jesus and His amiable Mother, knowing that the love of these sacred persons is the source of all good to our souls. St. Dominic, being one of the most fervent lovers of Jesus and Mary that ever existed, was in consequence the great favorite of the angels. He received from them all sorts of assist-

ance, during the long nights that love chained him to the altar steps, whilst pouring out his soul in the presence of his good Master, and invoking the patronage of his glorious Mistress. They were once seen, when the saint happened to lodge in the house of the bishop, lighting him with flambeaux from his chamber to and from the church, the doors of which they opened for him.

But this is not all. As for the practice of virtue, it is necessary that the will should be moved and the understanding enlightened; they often effect both. Thus they reveal the sublimest mysteries. It was an angel who gave the law to Moses—an angel who announced to the glorious Virgin the incarnation of the “Word”—to the Marys His resurrection, and to the Apostles His last coming. They endeavor to preserve us from sin, or to free us from it, after having fallen into it. Those lights which sometimes beam suddenly on the soul a clear knowledge of holy truths—those unforeseen movements which surprise us when we least expect them, and which move us so efficaciously to good, come to us by the agency of these blessed spirits. In those happy moments, wherein we find ourselves strangely pressed to give ourselves to God, without knowing why, let us recognize the exertions of the angels. They obtain for us a victory over our passions, the conquest of our bad inclinations, a knowledge of our faults and imperfections, and of our most hidden oppositions to grace—they invite us to penance, solicit us to make a good confession, and fully satisfy the divine justice. In fine, they support us in the way of virtue, console us in sufferings, quiet our fears, remove our scruples, and impart to us that holy joy and “divine peace, which surpasses all understanding.” When Raphael met Tobias, he wished him continual joy, and in leaving him, everlasting peace. Let us disengage ourselves from all created things, and the wishes of these holy spirits for our happiness will be accomplished. To enjoy true and continual peace, it is necessary to live to God alone.

MOTIVE EIGHTH.

The protection afforded to us by the Angels against the enemies of our salvation.

The life of man is a warfare; he has to fight against temptations within and temptations without—temptations from the world, and temptations from himself. It is a strange thing, that we ourselves are our most dangerous enemies, and that it would give us quite enough to do to wage war against ourselves. Yet this is not all; we have other combats to sustain. We must combat against the devils, powerful in might, cruel in rage, countless in number, indefatigable in pursuit. Being spiritual beings,

they strike invisibly—enter all places—see all things—leave no art, no wile, untried, to effect our ruin, and triumph in our defeat. O! you who read these lines! do you not tremble at the idea of such combats? On your victory depends your eternal fate. Consider what it is to be damned for ever, and the danger in which you are of being so, by the malice of the devils—and then you will be convinced of the necessity of being devout to their powerful adversaries, the holy angels.

The devils are cruel in their rage; the destruction of our corporeal existence would not suffice to glut their malice: they unceasingly seek to take away the life of our souls, and “go about” continually “seeking whom they may devour.” This infuriate malice is accompanied by such power, that, as we learn from the book of Job, no force on earth can be compared to it: millions of armed men could do nothing against the efforts of a single evil spirit. The Scripture calls them the powers and princes of this world and of darkness—the greater part of mankind being subject to their detestable tyranny.

These abominable spirits are exceedingly clever in deceiving; they often form plans and lay snares which entrap the most enlightened. Having deceived the first woman by his wiles, Satan still adopts the same means to undo her unthinking posterity—time has only rendered him more subtle and insinuating. “How do you know so well what is to happen my religious?” said St. Pachomius one day; “surely God alone can foresee what is to come.” “True,” replied the tempter, “I know it not—but my great experience enables me to form conjectures which amount to certainty.” This wicked enemy lays snares in all places for our destruction. In cities and deserts, in solitude and in company, we equally feel his assaults. He studies our humor and inclination, and erects his batteries against that part of our soul which he finds weakest. If he fears we shall overcome one temptation, he attacks us by several, and at a time in which he sees us less able to resist—as when a person has been some time without approaching the sacraments, or making meditation, or the like. Sometimes he retires for a time, that he may surprise us, and, when we least expect it, find ourselves undone.

These wicked spirits study the designs of God on a soul, in order to hinder it from corresponding with them. They often divert persons from following their vocation—induce others to embrace states to which they are not called—they tempt parents to oppose the vocation of their children—in fine, through the artifices of these subtle enemies, the greater number of persons do anything but what they should do.

If they cannot turn us from the ways of grace, they try to mingle in them; prompting us to pray, when God will have us labor for Him; to be angry and impatient when hindered from a good work; to be dis-

quieted at our faults ; to confess and communicate through imperfect motives ; to irritate ourselves with an unquiet zeal at the faults of others, and to forget our own. As they are without peace or order among themselves, they labor all they can to render us so too—often exciting scruples, doubts, anxieties—inspiring us with fears as to the validity of our past confessions—prompting us to make them all anew, and still to be dissatisfied. They give false ideas of piety—and if they see true devotion gain ground in any place, by means of prayer and frequent communion, they will cause some of those who use these means to fall into great faults, to furnish others with a pretext for declaiming against them.

They often amuse those who live in vice or error with a false peace, inspiring them to perform acts of mortification, to give alms, to pray, and the like—and thus lull them into a dangerous security, so that they never perceive the hazard they run.

They use great efforts to make us anticipate or be wanting to grace—thus causing us to counteract the designs of God. If it be necessary to do that good which God requires, it is equally so to do it in the manner and at the time He wishes. St. Philip Neri was assuredly called to the ecclesiastical state ; but, feeling that he should not embrace it until he was rather advanced in years, he could not be prevailed on by his friends to anticipate the time of God.

The Lord wishes we should go to confession—but the devils inspire us to approach the sacrament through self-love, rather to be delivered from the humiliation of sin, because it is annoying to our vanity, than from any love of God. He wishes that we approach the holy table : the devils prevent some, by various false pretexts, who would derive considerable profit, and inspire others to go, who have not the necessary dispositions.

O my God ! to how many delusions are we not liable—to how many miseries are we not subjected by the wiles of these ministers of hell ! St. John of the Cross, an eminent master of the spiritual life, says that even those who tend to perfection are subject to many defects—as a secret satisfaction in their good works, and a wish to appear skilled in holy things. Sometimes they manifest their devotion by external signs, as loud praying, sighing, and the like ; at other times they speak of their virtues ; though in the confessional they can scarcely command humility enough to declare their sins—at one time they make no account of their faults, and at another they are afflicted at them even to excess. They are never content with the means they are furnished with to be perfect, but are continually seeking for new ones. When deprived of sensible devotion, they are irritated against themselves and others ; they wish to be saints in a day, and without any trouble. They often contest with their

confessor to induce him to be of their opinion. When withdrawn from any exercise of piety to which they are addicted, they fear all is lost, and suppose that he does not understand the way by which they are led.

These wicked spirits, as we have already said, often represent things to us quite differently from what they are. They persuade persons in the world that devotion is only for those who live in monasteries, and quite incompatible with their state. Often they set before them the real or imaginary faults of such as profess piety, in order to prevent them from embracing it.

When they foresee special graces and great helps for a diocese or a city, by means of some servant of God, they omit nothing in order to lower him in the public estimation : and they not only persecute those who are employed actively in gaining souls to God, but those also who live in solitude, when possessed of extraordinary virtue, knowing that, by their prayers and constant union with God, they will help to save and sanctify many other persons.

The devils excite persons to exclaim against the abuse of frequent communion ; but, as F. Lewis of Granada says, this is often a great abuse—because many persons, who would reap considerable advantage by approaching, are thereby hindered from it. Our Lord revealed to St. Gertrude, that those who hindered frequent communion deprived Him of His great delight. I admit that it is necessary to know well the dispositions of those who often communicate—but to disapprove of so holy a practice is an effect of the hatred of the devils for this sacred mystery.

Before we conclude, let us remark another of their most common and most dangerous temptations, which renders most of our actions either useless or imperfect. It is to occupy ourselves with anything save that which we do. While at prayer, they afterward have to do—and when engaged in this exercise, they occupy us with something else ; thus, we perform neither as we ought. Each moment has its particular benediction ; let us do well what we are actually engaged in, and God will provide for the future.

Are you not now convinced of your want of superior force against such enemies, in order to be victorious ? Having seen so many wiles laid for your destruction, are you not resolved to make use of that succor which our good God has provided for you in His holy angels ? Every time that you feel pressed by temptation, go to your angel, and say to him, as St. Bernard exhorts you, “ Lord ! save me, or I perish ! God has given my soul in charge to you—bear it up in your hands—make it trample on the lion and the dragon,” and, as kings put thieves and outlaws to death, in order to preserve the lives and properties of their subjects, the blessed spirits will destroy the schemes of their apostate breth-

ren for our eternal ruin ; and with them we shall sing a canticle of joy and a psalm of jubilation, because we shall have attained the victory.

MOTIVE NINTH.

The great helps the holy Angels afford us at the hour of death.

If to a pagan philosopher death appeared of all terrible things the most terrible, in what light should it be viewed by a Christian, to whom God has revealed its consequences? When a person thinks seriously, that on the moment of death depends a happy or miserable eternity, his heart must be obdurate indeed, if he be not struck with fear ; for, "if the just be scarcely saved, where will the sinner appear?" O Lord! "enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no one living can be justified in thy sight!" The holy abbot Agatho, being seized with trembling at his last hour, and his religious having asked him the cause—he replied, that though by the great mercy of God, his conscience did not reproach him with anything, yet that the divine judgments being very different from those of men, he was in great alarm. No wonder he should have felt so—all our good works being imperfect in the sight of the divine Majesty. If the angels succor us in this dread moment, do they not prove themselves our true friends? It is in the time of affliction a person knows a sincere friend ; and behold in the hour of death, when all abandon us to our fate, when our body is consigned to the solitary tomb, and our soul "goes to the house of its eternity," the angels faithful to their charge, never depart from us. Our Lord once revealed that souls devoted to the angels during life shall receive extraordinary helps from them at the hour of death. And it is most just that the King of kings should thus evince His sense of the honors paid to His courtiers. Oh! blessed are those who by their love for and devotion to the angels, and submission to the holy lessons which they have inspired, find themselves encompassed with their protection at the last hour, as with "a tower of defence;" but woe to those who have seldom thought of them, never hearkened to them, or little loved them.

Having made the last step, and closed our eyes in this world, to open them in eternity, the angels present us before the bar of the Judge, and most zealously plead our cause. If heaven be awarded to us, transported with joy they accompany us thither ; or, if condemned to purgatory, they visit us there from time to time, bestowing on us every mark of the most tender and sincere friendship, and so consoling us in their angelic manner, that all the joys this world can afford are but affliction in comparison. As they long to see us their companions in bliss, they inspire persons to offer in suffrage for us prayers, alms, and mortifications (they

have often visibly appeared for this charitable end) ; in fine, as the learned Suarez teaches, at the day of judgment they will collect together the ashes of those of whom they have been the guardians and protectors. What can we add to cares and services so faithful, so affectionate? O holy spirits! why are you so kind to us poor creatures? Because in us you regard but God alone.

MOTIVE TENTH.

Devotion to the holy Angels is a sign of predestination to singular glory in heaven.

If we were a little more enlightened by holy faith, all our ambition would be to enjoy a high place in heaven. What has become of those famous conquerors, the Alexanders and the Cæsars, who once made whole nations tremble by their warlike valor and military skill? Where are the laurels they won and the conquests they achieved? What now remains to them of all their greatness? Here let us pour forth floods of tears over the blindness of men who are so violently attached to earthly things. All that passes away is vain and contemptible, whatever satisfaction it may confer; nothing should affect us but what is to last forever; and, indeed, nothing less can satisfy us. The human heart feels within it a violent impulse after greatness; thus we are never content with being what we are, but aspire to something better and more excellent. What a pity that it is only for earthly greatness we are solicitous, and that we remain in perfect indifference to that of heaven! How many say that they care not, provided that they may be in heaven at all, what place they hold there. No doubt, the last place there is too high for persons who once deserved an everlasting hell; but since our merciful God calls us to aspire after the highest, it would betray great baseness of soul to be indifferent about it. "Be ambitious of the better gifts," says the Holy Ghost. St. Teresa and St. Francis Borgia declared that, for one sole degree of increased glory in heaven, they would consent to burn in the flames of purgatory till the day of judgment. These enlightened souls well knew its excellence, whereas, we are incapable of discerning it, our sight being obscured by the vapors of flesh and blood. If it be asked, are not all the blessed perfectly content? we reply, they are; but their joy is not equal. "As one star differs from another in brightness, so the resurrection of the dead." The great spiritualist, Thaulerus, says, that there is more difference between one of the blessed who holds the first rank in the celestial empire, and another in an inferior degree, than between a mighty sovereign and an abject peasant. This should excite us to great and noble exertions, although there were

no other motive than that, by our greater glory and happiness, God will be more glorified eternally. One sole degree of the glory of God would cause a soul who truly loves Him to endure ten thousand deaths; and here it is not only one degree there is question of, but as many as there are moments in that eternity which is to be the term of our happiness. Devotion to the angels contributes wonderfully to the perfection of divine love, and consequently to the increase of glory in heaven. These holy spirits are all fire, and it is impossible to approach them often without catching fire and participating in their ardors. If, with the saints, we become sanctified, with the angels we are rendered celestial. It is the property of love to make lovers equal; therefore our love for, and union with, the angels, will give us some resemblance to them. Moreover, they are, as we before said, most anxious to render us holy and perfect. What profit should we not reap if we were more docile "to the voice of their orders?" if we loved to frequent their school and hearken to their instructions? When St. Teresa was about to enter a more perfect life, a celestial voice said to her that she should no longer hold converse with men, but with angels. If intercourse with men be an obstacle to sanctity, familiarity with the angels helps to our progress in it. Thus the greatest saints have been the most devoted to the angels. Let us endeavor to become so too, and we shall speedily advance in the ways of true sanctity, and enjoy in heaven an eminent degree of glory.

MOTIVE ELEVENTH.

The blessed Virgin is glorified by our devotion to the Angels.

The increase of the glory of the admirable Mother of God is a motive not a little powerful with those who love her. We read that many persons, vicious in other respects, have been so touched with the honor of this blessed Mother, as to protest that they would willingly sacrifice their lives for it. Now, if rebellious souls were so zealous for the honor of this august Queen of the sweets of paradise, with much more reason should pious souls be induced to labor in so holy a cause. We can never sufficiently honor her. According to the testimony of the great St. Bridget of Hungary, the angels, from the commencement of the world, conceived so warm a love and so pure a zeal for the interests of Mary that they were more pleased that she should receive existence than that they themselves had been created. How many persons, in imitation of these blessed spirits, and by their powerful succor, have since preferred the interest of this blessed Virgin to their own interest; her honor to their own honor! I have known several who were willing to sacrifice their life a thousand times for her honor, and who would remain amid the fire and flames of

purgatory till the day of judgment, to preserve her the least degree of glory. There is nothing which a good heart would not be willing to do and suffer for this holy Virgin ; all would appear little to it when done for her who deserved to be the mother of God. This it is which persuades me that the motive of her glory will induce men to be devout to the angels. Being mistress general of the celestial host, the angels are the soldiers of her who alone "is terrible as an enemy set in battle array." They have vigorously combated for her glory from the beginning, opposing themselves against Lucifer and his adherents, who refused to submit to her dominion, when God had revealed to them that she would one day become their Queen. Being the august Empress of Paradise, the angels are her subjects, and consider it a great honor to be obedient to her laws. As lady or mistress of the angels, these pure spirits are her servants, and so faithful that they fly at the least intimation of her will. According to the opinion of theologians, Mary is mother of the angels, and the friend of these holy spirits—for the Spouse in the Canticles says to her, "Speak, my beloved, for the friends hear ;" and these friends are the angels.

Now, do not these titles, which connect Mary with the angels, show that her glory is concerned in their veneration ? The servants, subjects and soldiers of so great a Queen have all manner of claims on our homage and devotion. Let us then praise and bless the holy angels, because this most pure Virgin, our amiable Mother, is praised and blessed in them and by them ; but let us, above all, praise that Lord who has operated all that is good or great in our Lady of the angels and the angels themselves—God alone ! God alone ! God alone !

MOTIVE TWELFTH.

The honor of God alone is connected with the devotion to the holy Angels.

When a person has said "GOD," he has said *all*. A true lover of this divine Being can say nothing more, since he knows nothing more. "What have I in heaven or on earth," exclaims such a one, "but thee, my God ! I care not for honors, or riches, or pleasures ; in heaven itself I regard but God alone—He is my only all in all things." Such was St. Catherine of Genoa ; she could not bear the word "mine ;" that is, she could not bear to regard self-interest, even in good things. "O my God, and my all !" used the humble St. Francis to exclaim ; and in repeating these words of love he frequently passed the days and nights. Pure love can see but God alone ; it can attach itself only to God alone. None but the interests of God alone can possibly affect it ; all its joy is to see them established ; all its regret is to see them neglected. A soul who loves in

this manner cares little for the esteem or contempt of creatures, however holy they may be. The contradictions it meets from the servants of God, and the censure heaped on such actions as grace inspires it to perform, give it no concern; on the contrary, as its abandonments increase, its joy becomes more great, its repose more calm, its peace more profound; for its greatest felicity is to be freed from the creature, in order to be wholly occupied with the Creator.

This increated Being, God alone, makes all the occupation of the blessed in heaven; and it were but just that He made that of men on earth; but, alas! they seek their treasure, their delight, elsewhere. Even those who are freed from grosser attachments are not without their petty desires and little interests. A holy soul one day saw in spirit that, among a thousand, scarcely one hundred loved God; and of this number, not one almost who loved Him purely for His own sake. The angelic nature is most admirable; but it is in and from God alone that it possesses all its excellencies. It is then for God alone that we should honor the blessed spirits. Holy souls, observing nothing in them but this infinite Majesty, exclaim, transported with joy at the happy discovery, "O celestial spirits! how amiable is your beauty, since it is a reflection of the increated beauty of the Divinity! We indeed should love you, since we see in you but God alone—since you have been always filled with God alone. How could we refuse to love you, since you have always loved and been always loved by love itself! O my soul! God wills and ordains that we love His angels. Let us then regulate our inclinations by His, and make these glorious princes the objects of our love, for God alone! God alone! God alone!

DEVOTION TO THE NINE CHOIRS OF ANGELS.

Second Part.

PRACTICE FIRST.

To have a singular devotion to the holy spirits of the first choir—the Angels, Archangels and Principalities.

THE third or last hierarchy of the holy angels is formed of three choirs—angels, archangels and principalities. They are particularly applied to the affairs of kingdoms and provinces, and in general to all that regards the happiness of man. Their goodness and kindness is so great that we can never make them a suitable return. The principalities are so called, says St. Gregory, because they are the princes of the other two choirs, and communicate to them those lights and intelligences which they receive from the higher hierarchies. The archangels watch over kingdoms and provinces; and the angels are appointed the guardians of men. Let us have a great devotion to this blessed choir, honoring not only our own angels, but also those of others. Let us honor the angels of infidels, and often go in spirit to the countries they inhabit, to pay our respects to them. These poor blind people know not even that there are angels, and behold the unwearied patience and love of these blessed spirits in guarding and defending them. Do make atonement to them; communicate sometimes, give alms, hear Mass, for this intention, and let your heart often salute these holy angels. The more they are slighted, the more they will love and acknowledge your services. If a great king, in the revolt of his subjects, received considerable services from foreigners, he would not fail to acknowledge them gratefully when reinstated in his dominions; hence judge what you may expect from the princes of the celestial realm. Do the same for the angels of heretics, for those of uneducated Catholics, the greater number of whom know as little about these holy spirits as pagans and infidels. Pray for their conversion, that knowing the adorable Jesus, whom God has sent, and Mary, His amiable Mother, they may also know and honor the angels.

Be devout to the angels of your friends; these often render you services which you would not receive from your own guardian. As, in the number of your friends, your confessor holds the first place, honor par-

ticularly his angel, and pray him to bear on his mind a perfect knowledge of the designs of God on those whom he directs. Honor the angels of your parents, relations, benefactors, and of all with whom you have to do ; they have more part than you think in the favors you receive by means of those persons. Be devout to the angels of your enemies, it is the true way to gain them ; or, if God wills that you should suffer the effects of their hatred, it is the best means of obtaining grace to love them cordially, and make a good use of your sufferings. In fine, revere the angels of the sovereign pontiff, the bishops, the clergy, and all persons in authority, that they may fitly discharge their obligations.

From the angels, let us ascend to the archangels, who watch over empires, etc. Let us not only honor those among them who guard our own city or kingdom, but also those of the places through which we pass, as Father le Fevre, the first companion of St. Ignatius, used to do. The angelic doctor teaches that God generally makes use of the ministry of the angels for all that He does on earth ; let us invoke them in time of plague, famine, war, and other public calamities, and we shall soon perceive the effects of their charitable cares.

Our churches and altars have angels, not only to render homage to the divine Sovereign who resides in them in His Sacrament, but also to guard and defend them. A holy solitary once learned from the mouth of an angel, that he had been appointed to watch over an altar, and had never departed from it since the moment of its consecration. It is to these angels we should recur to supply our negligences and tepidities ; to atone for our irreverences and disrespects before the divine Sacrament. It is well to unite in the love and homage which they continually render to it, and like the Psalmist, to "sing canticles of praise to our God in the presence of His angels."

O my Lord and my God ! here permit me to bewail, in the presence of your divine Majesty, the deplorable blindness of Christians, who are the children of light, regarding your holy sacrament. Is it, then, true that they still believe you to be really present in this adorable mystery, and behave as they do ? We are seized with horror when we reflect on the irreverences committed against you by heretics and infidels ; but those offered to you by Christians, who profess themselves ready to sacrifice their lives in defence of this adorable truth, are inconceivable. We have seen, with astonishment, tabernacles full of dust and cobwebs—chalices, from which the precious blood of God is received, most mean and despicable—and these covered with such tattered linen as to excite disgust. If we enter our churches, we find them either totally deserted or crowded with persons whose sentiments and conduct ill befit the sanctity of the place. This is not all—the sufferings which love has imposed

on our Sovereign stop not here. Many, by a malice which should cause the pillars of heaven to tremble, receive the body of the God of heaven and earth in the state of mortal sin, either because they conceal them in confession, or had not a true sorrow for them, or a firm purpose to avoid those occasions which would lead them anew to their commission. We weep over the passion of the Son of God—we loudly condemn Judas who betrayed Him to the Jews—but the sin of the unworthy communicant is much greater, since he delivers Him up to the devil! Oh, angels of paradise! I address myself to you; knowing the obduracy of men, inspire them with all that respect for the adorable body of your Sovereign which they are capable of conceiving—give them a knowledge of the dispositions with which it should be received—that this abominable crime, this sin more hellish than human, may be no more committed. Inspire the rich to provide churches and altars with suitable decorations, and repair, by your unceasing homage, the insults which have been offered to this mystery of inconceivable love.

These holy spirits, knowing so perfectly the divine excellence of that Lamb without spot, whom love, incomprehensible love, has caused to take up His abode among us, have great zeal for the decoration of His altars. It is giving them as great joy to make presents which contribute thereto, as it inspires them with regret to see them so much neglected. They cannot comprehend how Christians, enlightened by faith, can be so anxious about the decoration of their houses and persons, and so utterly indifferent to the ornamenting of the house of God.

Confraternities and sodalities, also, have their angels. It is related by F. Barri, of the Society of Jesus, that a young student, a member of the confraternity of the holy Virgin, established in the colleges of the society, was favored with the presence of the tutelary of this association for three days before his death, because, as the angel said, he had been observant of its rules.

Let us also be devout to the principalities. Man is in himself a little world; he should rule over his passions and appetites, as a king over his subjects; but as his empire is so weakened by sin, he stands in need of support and assistance. The principalities, so called because of their dominion over the inferior choirs, will render him their aid, provided he do not render himself unworthy of it by neglecting devotion to them.

PRACTICE SECOND.

To honor specially the Powers, Virtues, and Dominations.

The second hierarchy of angels is composed of the powers, virtues, and dominations. The dominations, as the principal choir, give or dispense the orders which they receive from the higher angels—the virtues

enable us to execute them—and the powers to surmount the obstacles which the devils oppose thereto. We have elsewhere demonstrated the malicious arts of these wicked spirits; it is to the powers that God has given the special grace to defeat them. Hence it is of the greatest importance in the spiritual life to honor these blessed spirits. We cannot detail the happy effects which proceed from it. When we see storms raised in the Church, or opposition excited against those who labor for the increase of divine glory—if we recur to the holy powers, we shall soon perceive how powerful they are in overturning and defeating the machinations of hell.

With all our good desires, we do very little; our tongues are longer than our arms. It seems as if nothing could arrest our course—and when we make a few steps, we grow tired and think of reposing. Poor, weak creatures! Our senses and inclinations overcome us; we yield to them for a trifle, and yet we are still weaker than we think. Let devotion to the virtues be, then, our resource. St. Gregory supposes that it is by them God generally operates the greater number of miracles. Let us invoke them in our weaknesses, and counsel those who often fail, notwithstanding their good desires, to do so too. Let us call on them in the hour of temptation, and praise and thank them when we have gained the victory.

If the dominations dispense the orders of God to the other angels, they manifest His holy will to man. Oh! how happy should we be, if we always discerned this blessed will! But alas! we often mistake for it the will of the creature, and still oftener, when we know it, we find it difficult to submit to it. We wish that the will of God may be done, but in such a manner as we wish. This is not true conformity. A soul touched with the love of God would fly to the remotest corner of the earth at His nod; she wishes that God may be absolute in her and in all creatures—that His will may be done as He pleases, and because He pleases. If at any time she is ignorant of this will, and prays to the dominations, they will not fail to manifest it to her, being secretaries of state to the great King Jesus. O my God! how just it appears, that all should serve and be subject to you! “All the nations are before you as a drop of dew.” He who knows your will, and does it not, deserves punishment indeed. O! may it be done in all things, and may we seek our peace only in its accomplishment. Amen.

PRACTICE THIRD.

To entertain a profound respect and extraordinary love for the Thrones, the Cherubim and Seraphim.

The first hierarchy of the angels is composed of the thrones, the cherubim and seraphim. The latter excel in love—hence their name, sera-

phim, which signifies ardor. Though all the angels love fervently, the love of the seraphim exceeds by many degrees the love of the other inferior choirs. The great St. Denis distinguishes in it all the properties of fire. This element is always in motion: the seraphim continually tend to God. Fire always acts while it has matter; the seraphim continually feed on God alone. Fire is inflexible; the love of the seraphim is immutable. Fire possesses great warmth: the seraphim are all flame. Fire never loses its light; the ardor of the seraphim is never lessened. Fire penetrates the matter on which it acts; the seraphim enjoy the most perfect union with the divinity. In fine, fire warms and purifies; the seraphim convey, from their divine centre, love and light to all the inferior angels.

Science is attributed to the cherubim, as love is to the seraphim. They have, says St. Gregory, all the plenitude of the divine light, and their sacred brightness irradiates the other hierarchies. Ezekiel saw them in a vision, all full of eyes, to designate their vast intelligence.

The thrones are so called because God is said to be seated on them; but if material thrones give repose to the sovereigns who sit upon them, the celestial thrones receive their repose from the Eternal King. They enjoy an incomprehensible peace—for wherever God abides, He communicates His divine peace and tranquillity. This peace of God is very different from that of men. "I come," said our divine Master, "not to send peace, but the sword." To obtain this so desirable peace, it is necessary not to fear or hope for anything from creatures—to live by faith—to make no more account of created things than if they were not—to desire no share in the friendship or esteem of men—to lose, in fine, all our desires in an entire acquiescence in the divine pleasure. Be devout to the thrones, and they will exert themselves in obtaining for you this greatest of all blessings.

In like manner with the cherubim. It is said that in the way of virtue we know more than we do; but it is certain that perfect knowledge is rare. We speak of that of the saints. Few persons are practically convinced of the excellence of poverty and humiliation—of the advantages of the hidden and suffering life. It is in the school of a God, and at the foot of the crucifix, that this divine lesson is to be learned. Let us frequent it under the auspices of the cherubim, the spirits of light, and we shall soon be illumined, and walk in the brightness of the children of God.

If the cherubim be the ministers of the lights of God, the seraphim are those of His love. Whoever aspires to this most sublime virtue should be particularly devout to them. The saints most remarkable for their love of God have been most devout to these divine spirits—witness a St. Francis and a St. Teresa. The glory reserved for such souls in heaven is

to be elevated to and ranked in this blessed choir. How good is our God, to associate His poor servants among such supereminent beings as the holy seraphim!

PRACTICE FOURTH.

To have a great Devotion to the Seven Spirits who are before the Throne.

The holy Scriptures assure us that there are seven of the holy angels specially appointed to assist before the throne, and stand continually in the presence of the Most High. In the first chapter of the Apocalypse, grace and peace are given in the name of these sublime spirits. We only know the names of three of them—St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael. Some say that the fourth is called Uriel, of whom there is mention made in the book of Esdras. F. Barri relates that in the city of Palermo, in Sicily, and in that of Rome, a church was dedicated to God in honor of these seven angels, and that they were excellently portrayed there with their appropriate symbols. St. Michael was represented as triumphing over Lucifer, bearing in his left hand a verdant palm, and a lance in his right, at the top of which was a standard as white as snow, with a cross in the middle; St. Gabriel appeared with a flambeau shut up in a lantern in one hand, and a mirror in the other, variegated with spots of different colors; St. Raphael was painted with a fish in his mouth, and a box in his hand, guiding Tobias. Uriel, or the fourth angel, held in his right hand a naked sword, while his left hung enveloped in flames. The fifth was in the attitude of a suppliant, with his eyes modestly bent; the sixth had a crown of gold in his right hand, and a whip of three black cords in the left; and the seventh bore, enwrapped in the end of a mantle wherewith he was clothed, a quantity of white roses. We are induced to be minute in describing this picture in the hope that some person may paint such a one, knowing from experience that even a view of the tablets or images of the angels is of great profit and advantage. But to say something of each in particular:

St. Michael, the first of these blessed princes, defended the honor of the Word incarnate against Lucifer. It is supposed he was the first who adored him in the manger. He is the tutelary of the holy Church, and is in a particular manner the protector of France. At Avranches there is a church dedicated to him, vulgarly called Mount St. Michael. He is the guardian of the dying, according to Saints Augustine and Bonaventure. This latter affirms that he receives orders from the Mother of God to assist more specially those who are devout to her. St. Michael is the highest among the seraphim, and the chief of the celestial host. If we love the Church—if we love ourselves—if we are desirous to overcome our

self-love, and solicitous to provide against our last hour, we must be devout to him.

St. Gabriel is also one of the seraphim, though, like St. Michael, denominated an archangel. But this title is common to the most glorious of the blessed spirits, as that of angel is to them all, of whatever order they may be. It was this holy spirit that was deputed by God to announce the incarnation of His Son to Mary. It is supposed that he was the guardian angel of this blessed Virgin. Hence, judge of his superior sanctity and excellence, and learn to honor him as he deserves. We need only to peruse the history of Tobias, to be devout to St. Raphael, the third angel—for he rendered this young man most important services, conducting him safely in his journey, and teaching him how to avoid the snares which Satan had so effectually employed to destroy the former husbands of the wife whom he had espoused. Pilgrims and travelers ought to invoke him, and indeed all Christians, as we are all pilgrims and sojourners on earth.

Let us honor all these blessed Seven—let us be but truly devout to them—let us beg their prayers, in order that we may avoid the seven capital sins, and obtain the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

PRACTICE FIFTH.

To converse interiorly with the Angels.

Render familiar to yourselves the converse of the holy angels, says St. Bernard to his religious, and often call them to mind. We willingly converse with men—and behold the world is full of angels, and these most amiable and excellent in every point of view, and yet scarcely can there be found a few who think of them. Is it that we doubt of their presence, because we do not behold them with our bodily eyes? Have we not faith? Yes—but alas! it is greatly weakened by our attachment to earthly things. The holy solitaries being disengaged from all, loved the company of the angels, and spent whole days in communing with them; while we find an hour much too long to converse with these blessed spirits. Poor, blind creatures! our life is wholly sensual. A certain holy person being one day standing near a window which opened on a populous street, was suddenly favored with a ray of divine light, by which she saw that men lived in an almost total forgetfulness of spiritual things. Being thus penetrated, she listened to what those who were passing by said, and remarked that not one spoke of God, or of the angels. Some spoke of houses or farms—others of clothes—these of the weather—those of health and the like. O! how many angels pass by with these poor people, said she, and yet no one thinks of them. Greatly affected

at this consideration, she went to a fair, which was then being held in the vicinity, to pay her respects interiorly to the angels whom she knew to be there in great numbers, in the company of those of whom they had care, and who were quite unmindful of them. Behold a practice worthy of imitation! When you walk through town, salute interiorly the angels of those whom you meet. When you go to the country, pay homage to the blessed spirits, who are there even more neglected, because of the ignorance of the poor peasantry. When you enter into a church, or a public assembly, let holy faith manifest to you the presence of the angels. When you make a journey, entertain yourself with the angels of those who travel with you. When among your friends, say from time to time a little word to their angels—and when alone with yourself, speak to and entertain these blessed spirits.

If we exhort you to be familiar with and devout to all the angels, we are still more pressing in inviting you to honor that holy spirit to whose care God committed you at the moment of your birth. He thinks continually of you; never lose sight of him. A little prayer, said morning and night, is too slight a testimony of your gratitude toward him. If a prince of the earth came to reside with you, would you think it enough to pay your respects to him once or twice a day, and leave him alone the rest of the time—particularly if his object was to load you with benefits and favors of which you were utterly unworthy? Surely, you would not. Alas! it is only to spiritual things that we are indifferent and insensible. Take then a quarter or half an hour sometimes to pay this good angel your homage. Prostrate yourself before him; crave pardon for your past ingratitude; ask his blessing; tell him all you would wish to say to a most faithful friend: Now speak to him of your weaknesses, miseries, temptations—and then of the obligations you have to him, of his beauty, his perfections, his admirable qualifications. Converse with him as with a good father, a tender mother, an incomparable friend, a vigilant pastor, a charitable guide, a skilful physician, a powerful protector. Entertain your good angel at different intervals in one of these characters—and be assured that the time will pass much more agreeably and profitably than in the company of creatures. Sometimes you are at a loss for a companion—behold your good angel always ready to converse with you. When a certain religious woman, who had no relations or friends that might visit her, was asked if she felt not mortified when she saw the other sisters visited—“No,” replied she—“for I have a very amiable person to converse with—and when I learn that one of the community is called to the parlor, I immediately go and pay him a visit.” As they did not understand what she meant, she led them to an image of an angel, which was in the monastery, and said, “Behold my father, and mother, and

friend, and acquaintance! I assure you I leave his company more content than our sisters leave the parlor." We ought also often visit in spirit heretical and infidel kingdoms to converse with the angels of these poor people, and treat with them about their conversion. One day we can honor the angels of one kingdom—and another, the angels of some other. Sometimes those of Canada or China—at others, those of Mexico or Japan. It would be advisable to visit, in spirit, the angels of Christian and Catholic countries also, who (as we before said) are but too much forgotten. Another very delightful practice is to traverse, in spirit, the heavenly Jerusalem—now saluting the Cherubim, then the Seraphim, and so the other choirs. It is also very laudable to salute the angels our acquaintances when we meet them. This is easier than some may imagine; it is only necessary to make a little compact with yourself, which you will renew at least every month, that, as often as you salute any person, you will also salute his angel guardian. On these occasions, when you remember it, say interiorly to these holy angels, that you salute them. By this means, the recollection of these blessed spirits will be gradually facilitated. Some, when writing to friends, salute their angel guardians. I know it will be said, that these practices are rare. I admit that they are so, but maintain that they ought to be general. It is an extraordinary thing to see a real saint: but as this deplorable truth should not hinder us from aspiring to sanctity—so, that want of devotion to the angels, which is so general, cannot warrant us to refuse them our love and veneration.

PRACTICE SIXTH.

To make Novenas in honor of the holy Angels—to take certain days to honor them—and to celebrate their Feasts with particular devotion.

The Catholic Church teaches, that we should not superstitiously attach ourselves to certain numbers; but there are some mysterious ones, consecrated by the piety of the faithful, which she sanctions and authorizes—as that of *three*, which is the number of the holy Trinity; that of *forty*, which is the number of days our Lord spent in the wilderness; that of *nine*, which corresponds with the number of the angelic choirs. Any devotion practiced for nine days is termed a *Novena*. St. Teresa was very partial to this practice, as she herself tells us. It is most useful to perform such a one in honor of the angels; we, ourselves, have seen miraculous things effected by it. It may be as follows: the first day, honor the angels of the last choir by some prayer—nine *Gloria Patris*, for example—and ask them for the grace or favor you want; and thus ascend to all the choirs successively. If your object be the graces peculiar to each

choir, you can, on the first day, ask the angels to obtain for you a lively faith ; on the second, beg of the archangels holy zeal ; on the third, honor the Principalities, and beg the extinction of the reign of sin ; on the fourth, the Powers, for their support against the malicious efforts of hell ; on the fifth, the Virtues, that they may facilitate the practice of that perfection to which all Christians are by their baptismal engagement bound to aspire ; on the sixth, honor the Dominations, that you may know the divine will ; on the seventh, the thrones, that, by a perfect subjection to this blessed will, you may obtain " that peace which surpasses all understanding ;" on the eighth, honor the Cherubim, that, taught from on high, you may renounce in practice the maxims and doctrine of the world ; and, finally, on the ninth, honor the Seraphim, for the establishment of the reign of the love of God in the hearts of all. This devotion of Novenas is also a useful preparation for the feasts of our Lord and His blessed Mother, as well as of the angels. It may consist of any pious practice, as of nine acts of mortification, nine genuflections, nine visits to the holy sacrament, or nine Ave Marias, a devotion which our Lord revealed to St. Mechtilde. It is well to commence by receiving the holy sacraments, that our souls being cleansed from sin, God may be more ready to hear and grant our requests. Thus much for the devotion of the Novena.

Tuesday in each week (since there is no day or week in which we do not experience the protection of the angels) should be sacred to the angelic devotion—as also the 29th of September and the 8th of May, the feasts of St. Michael. In Normandy they devote the 16th of October to honor the apparition of this glorious archangel on the Mount of Tombe, commonly called Mount St. Michael. The church built there in his honor is frequented by crowds of pilgrims on this day, and numberless miracles are operated by his intercession. The 18th of March is the feast of St. Gabriel ; the 24th of October, that of St. Raphael ; and the 2d of the same month is consecrated to the angels guardians. All these days should be solemn feasts with the devotees of the holy angels. They would do well to prepare for them by some act of mortification (St. Francis fasted forty days to prepare for the feast of St. Michael), or by the Novena, and to celebrate the feast itself by approaching the sacraments, reciting the office of and litany and beads of these blessed spirits, each one according to his time and devotion.

Behold another way of honoring the angels : when about to celebrate the festival of a saint, form the intention of honoring his or her guardian ; thus you will keep a perpetual holiday in honor of the angels. Love to visit churches and altars dedicated to them ; you will thereby obtain, through their intercession, the most precious gifts and graces.

The Emperor Otho III. made a pilgrimage barefooted to the church of St. Michael on Mount Gargan in Rome. A few years since it pleased our Lord to excite a great devotion to these blessed spirits in the city of Rouen, the capital of Normandy. The occurrence was as follows: Some persons, being on their way to visit the church of our Lady of Good Succor, and feeling inspired to say a few prayers at the church of St. Michael, which was nigh, felt quite sorry to find it almost abandoned, and no traces left of that devotion which was formerly exhibited there. This induced them to form at once the resolution of visiting it occasionally, in which they were joined by many others. In a short time the number so increased that, for want of room in the church, the sermon, which they had every month in honor of the angels, was obliged to be preached in the open air. Many were the advantages derived to those who assisted at it.

PRACTICE SEVENTH.

To have a great Confidence in the Angels, and recur to them in all necessities.

“They who trust in the Lord are as Mount Sion; God encompasses them with His holy mountains.” These mountains, spoken of by the psalmist, are the holy angels. O! how happy is that soul whose humble confidence merits such protection! She shall not fear the arrow flying in the dark, nor the noon-day devil.

After all we have said, it would seem that you should not want a great confidence in the angels. “Why would you fear,” says St. Bernard, “having such faithful, wise, and potent friends as the angels?” “May joy be always with you,” said Raphael to Tobias; “I shall conduct you thither, and reconduct you hither.” The angels are incessantly watching over us; wherever we go we are surrounded by these blessed spirits. Why, then, do we fear? While asleep, there are more eyes open to guard us than there are stars in the heavens; when awake, and in the midst of danger, there are more angels armed in our defence than there are rays in the sun or atoms in the air. But, unhappy creatures!—nothing moves us but what strikes our senses. Here I must confess my utter astonishment at the little confidence of men in the protection of heaven. O! the avariciousness of the human heart! said our Lord once to St. Teresa. It seems to it that the whole world cannot supply its wants; it feels nothing but inquietude, both for temporal and spiritual things. Although there were no providence, we could not place more reliance on human means. What a pity to see even spiritual persons counting so much on their own industry, and so much occupied with what concerns them. Let

us place all our hope in the Lord, and all our confidence in His providence. Let us beg of Him to open our eyes to the protection of the angels, as he did those of the servant of Elias. Then, seeing that "there is more for us than against us," we cannot help confiding in such powerful patronage, nor fail to lift our hands, in our spiritual and corporeal dangers, to those holy mountains which the Lord has set for our defence, and appointed for our protection, through a marvelous excess of incomprehensible love.

PRACTICE EIGHTH.

To labor for the Conversion of Sinners and the release of Souls from Purgatory—and to practice Virtue, etc., in honor of the Angels.

What can we do more agreeable to the angels than to labor with them for the glory of our common Master? It is His glory which causes this almost infinite number of blessed spirits to watch so indefatigably over us poor sinners; and what wonder, when even the shadow of the interests of this divine being should be upheld at the risk of the annihilation of all creatures. O, my God! why are you not known by us! This world is indeed a land of forgetfulness in your regard. A God-man having sacrificed his life, in the midst of an infinity of sufferings for your divine interest, we should either renounce Christianity, or endeavor to advance it by every possible means. Here it is we should pour out floods of tears over the insensibility and blindness of men. Great expenses are incurred for decorating and pampering a body which will in a few days become the food of worms—and nothing, or less than nothing, is done for the soul! Immense revenues are expended for the support of vanity and ambition, and scarcely will a pound be given to advance the glory of God! The greatest ignorance prevails among the peasantry—whole villages are desolated by the reign of sin—the establishment of schools would be the grand remedy—but, alas! few or none care to contribute towards it. They can find money enough to purchase rich plate and precious furniture!—it is only for the interest of God that they have none. O horror of horrors! I plainly see, my God! the truth of your divine words—that, though "many are called, few are chosen."

The example of the blessed spirits should animate us to do and suffer all, in order to save our souls: it should also encourage us to labor for the salvation of others. Let us act in concert with these blessed spirits for this end. Their example should animate us, though we meet little success. St. Ignatius proposed it as a stimulus to his children. The holy angels faithfully continue their labors and cares for us during forty or sixty, or eighty years, or whatever be the term of our lives, though they

are sure the object of them will reap no fruit or advantage, through his own malice. Hence, confessors, preachers, and all who labor in any shape for the extension of the reign of God, should be singularly devout to these holy spirits. The charity of these blessed spirits extends beyond the grave. It is doing them a great favor to pray for the poor souls in Purgatory. Let us succor them as much as we can, by the holy mass, alms, indulgences, etc. They are truly deserving of our compassion, and the angels will not fail, as being interested for them, to reward our charity with the most precious graces.

The practice of chastity is absolutely necessary to gain the friendship of the angels. Virginitv is their favorite virtue, as it has been of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the two St. Johns. O virgins! whoever you may be, remember you possess a treasure of inestimable price—one which assimilates you to the angels. But, as in proportion to its excellence, you should have a more lively apprehension of its loss, so adopt more earnestly the necessary means in order to its preservation. These are mortification, guard of the senses, flight of the world, and true and sincere humility. This virtue of humility is one which the angels require in those devoted to them; they cannot bear the proud. The practice of recollection and prayer is also most pleasing to them; they have been visibly seen assisting persons in this holy exercise. St. Bernard saw them noting the manner in which his religious made their prayer.

But if we would be truly devout to the angels, we should once for all take the resolution of avoiding deliberate faults and imperfections, of searching out and overcoming our predominant passion, the source of our most frequent irregularities. Endeavor every day to sacrifice some inclination of yours in honor of the angels. If we remembered that our angel witnesses all our actions, and that he abhors sin, it would be some restraint on us, as even pagan philosophers, who believed that an invisible guide presided over their thoughts and action, acknowledged. "Dispose and regulate all your thoughts and actions," says one of them, quoted by F. Drexelius, in his book on the angels' guardians, "for nothing internal or external is hidden from the invisible witness or guardian who watches over you." If this was the sentiment of a pagan, what ought to be that of a Christian?

PRACTICE NINTH.

To endeavor to extend the devotion to the Angels.

If the angels do all they can for the service of man, man is obliged in justice and gratitude to spare no pains in the service of the angels. We should neglect no means in the order of God for the increase of their

glory. One method of honoring them seems to be to distribute images and pictures of these glorious spirits, particularly among the peasantry, and the poor and ignorant of the city. It would be well to recommend our friends to set up such pictures in their chambers or oratorios—as also to make presents of them to some chapel or altar. Constantine the Great caused four images of the angels to be wrought, and in the most exquisite manner. Another and a more laudable means is to lend and distribute books which treat of their excellencies. Among others, those of F. Barri, F. Nouet, Drexelius, and Coret—all of the Society of Jesus. These inspire such devotion to the angels as would be likely to last during the rest of our lives.

Preachers could greatly serve this devotion by instructing their auditors in it from time to time—seculars, by explaining it to their friends—a master, in his house—a father or mother, to their children—a person in the country, to the peasants—a teacher, to his pupils—a friend, to his friend.

But the best way to honor the angels is to procure the establishment of some little sodality in their honor.



